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Great Irishmen in war and
politics

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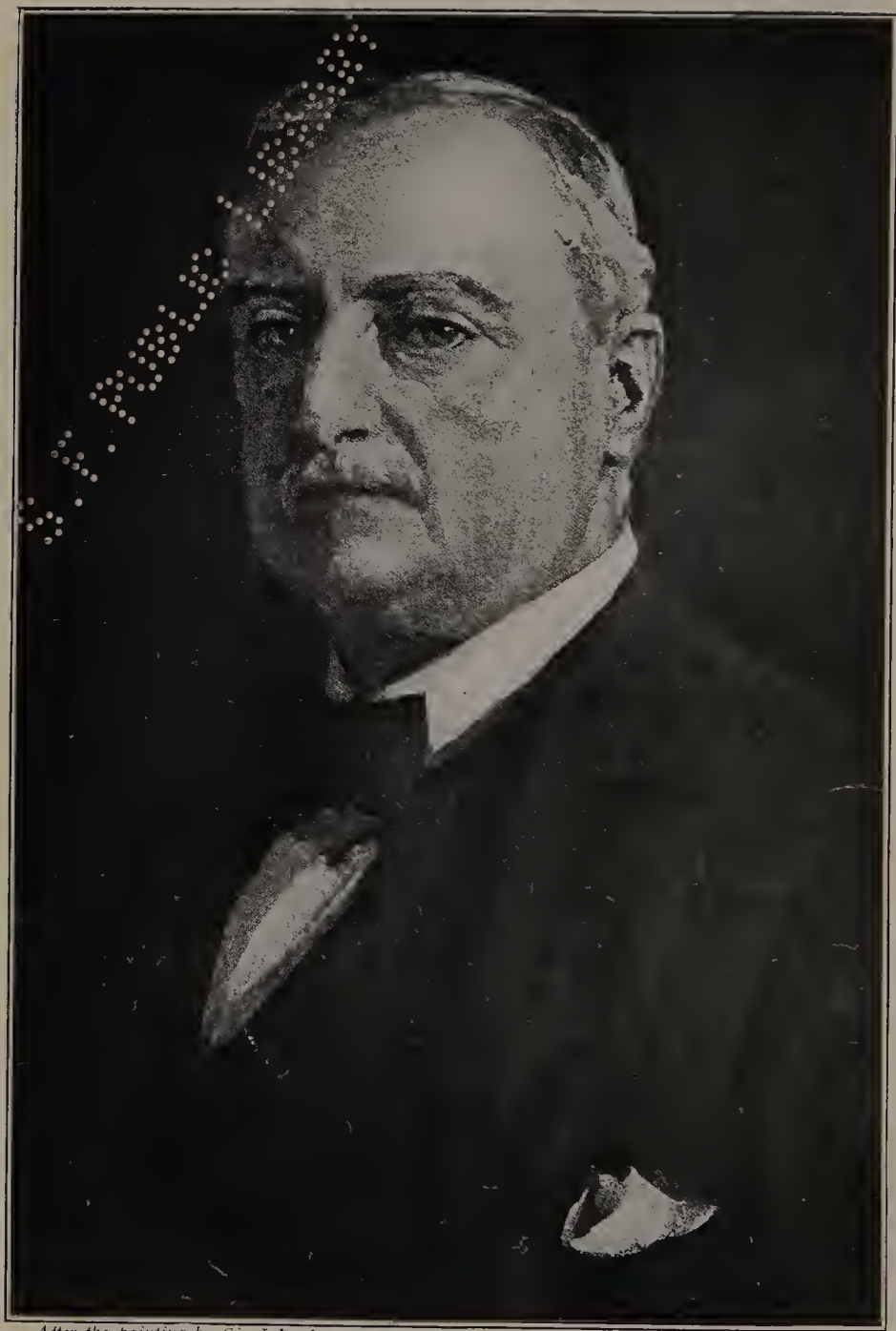
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After the painting by Sir John Lavery, A.R.A.]

JOHN E. REDMOND.

Frontispiece.

GREAT IRISHMEN

IN WAR AND POLITICS

BY

JOHN E. REDMOND

T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P.

JOSEPH KEATING

CAPT. STEPHEN L. GWYNN and

D. POLSON

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Dedicated

TO

JOSEPH COWEN,

FOR MANY YEARS M.P. FOR NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

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FOREWORD

[When the present work was submitted for the approval of John Redmond, it was not anticipated that his name would be sadly included with those of great Irishmen who are gone.—F. L.]

THE publication of this book must be of great value to our cause.

It has been extremely difficult to get people in this country to realise that the appeal which we made at the commencement of the War, to Irishmen, to join the Army, was not addressed only to Irishmen in Ireland herself, but to Irishmen everywhere, and the extraordinary history of the Tyneside Irish Brigade, which describes how five battalions of Irishmen were enrolled in a comparatively short space of time on the Tyneside, shows how magnificently our appeal was responded to by the Irishmen of Great Britain. The doings of the Tyneside Irishmen in the Field have reflected credit on the Irish race, and I am glad that in this book is written a permanent record of their devotion and heroism.

JOHN E. REDMOND.

*Every Irishman they were
who joined the British Army*

THE IRISH IN GREAT BRITAIN

GREAT IRISHMEN

THE IRISH IN GREAT BRITAIN

I HAVE to deal almost exclusively with the Irish in Great Britain, when they seized a glorious opportunity of contributing their full share to the struggle for freedom of the civilised nations of Europe. Else I might well be tempted to tarry over the relations which have always existed between the two islands.

Even in the days before Christ there are stories of Irish immigration into Scotland, giving indeed to modern Scotland the ancient name of Ireland, spreading the Gaelic tongue and taking their share in the fighting of the times. With the introduction of Christianity the relations between the two isles became even more intimate. The Irish nation after their conversion by St. Patrick became the missionary nation of Europe. Monasteries and colleges were founded all over the island, and these communities sent forth their scholars and their saints to spread the new religion and the new civilisation.

By an instinct uncommon among his countrymen at the time, Joseph Cowen realised this epoch of Irish history : “ It is not generally known, or, if known, is overlooked,”

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said Mr. Cowen in one of his speeches, "that Ireland, after the six centuries which followed the introduction of Christianity, was the seat of the industrial arts and the school of the West. Residence there was considered essential to establish a literary reputation; and to her seminaries and universities students flocked from every part of Christendom. They were Irish missionaries who first presented to the illiterate Saxon the rudiments of literature, science, architecture, music, and even the means of shaping the letters used in writing the English language. Irish monks were the workmen who built most of the early Christian edifices. Old St. Paul's Cathedral in London, and the magnificent roof that spans Westminster Hall, were of Irish design. At that time Ireland was the Christian Greece—the centre of scholastic enlightenment and enterprise."

In warfare the two races also met, sometimes as enemies, sometimes as friends and allies. There were Irishmen at the Battle of Hastings, as there were at Waterloo or in Gallipoli. Indeed, Irish Battalions were part of every English army since the beginning of time. Sometimes the Irish soldier was at home fighting by the side of his own clan and under his own chief; sometimes he was in England, intermingled with the armies and entangled in the political struggles of England or Scotland. The majority of them threw in their lot with the worthless Stuarts, only to be repaid with black ingratitude by the contemptible Charles II.; and decisive fights between the Stuarts and the English Revolution were fought on Irish soil. In the days of the Stuarts a large colony of

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Irish were at once the hope of one party and the bogey of another. At no time was England without a sufficiently large colony of Irishmen.

It was not, however, till the opening of the nineteenth century that there began that great emigration into England and Scotland, which is represented to-day by so large a body as two millions of people of Irish birth or origin outside the shores of Ireland and within those of Great Britain. Poor and unprogressive conditions in Ireland were side by side with better conditions and rapid progress in England. With the growth of the commercial importance and enterprise of England came a growth in the immigration of Irishmen, mainly on the look-out for the more certain employment and the better wages of their great commercial neighbour. The growth, for instance, of the railway system brought to England and Scotland large masses of the stalwart navvies, who were glad to take on the rough work of building up the railroad system. In the later forties, however, we find the real beginning of that great section of Irishmen who now form a twentieth of the entire population of Great Britain. In 1845 the population of Ireland had gone to a point between eight and nine millions of people. They were for the most part tenants at will, with excessive rents, and reduced to potatoes not only as their main crop but as their chief food. It had been pointed out for years, by eminent English as well as Irish economists, that such a condition of things was perilous; these warnings had been given for years—for generations—from Swift to Arthur Young, from Arthur Young to John Stuart Mill and Thomas

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Carlyle. Unheeded, however, the country was allowed to go to Niagara. The potato crop failed, and a large part of the Irish people stood face to face with starvation.

Many thousands of them did starve. I have known myself men who had to pick their way through the corpses lying on the roadsides of Ireland. As in all things Irish, there is controversy as to the exact number who did perish by hunger. Irish writers place it at a million. There is no doubt as to the vast numbers which the famine sent out of Ireland; their numbers are recorded in the census returns. Sometimes the rush of the Irish exiles reached to nearly a quarter of a million in one year; for many years they rarely sank below one hundred thousand; ultimately five millions left Ireland; and the population which in 1845 was getting on to nine millions, gradually came down to four millions and a half, the population of the present date.

The majority, as I have said, went to America for a refuge; some went to Australia, where they and their descendants to-day form a fourth to a third of the population; a lesser number went to Canada. But all these flights required a certain though small amount of capital, and as there were nothing but hunger and plague in Ireland there were still many tens of thousands who had no money and yet had to fly somewhere, and England and Scotland were nearer and cheaper to reach than either the other side of the Atlantic or the Antipodes. Thus it was that Liverpool and Glasgow became the great portals through which so many Irish men and women passed into the new life of England and Scotland.

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The consequences were at first equally inauspicious for the two races. The emigrants came with bankruptcy of hope or resource, and many of them bankrupt in health. They fled from starvation and disease, but they brought something of both with them. You have only to consult the records of Liverpool at the period to realise at once the gigantic proportion of the exodus, its abysses of suffering and its message of death to others as well as to itself. The Irish immigration into Liverpool from the first day of November, 1846, to the twelfth day of May, 1847, amounted to one hundred and ninety-six thousand three hundred and thirty-eight souls.

When the year ended, the total number of immigrants, excluding those who were bound for America, reached the immense total of two hundred and ninety-six thousand two hundred and thirty-one, all "apparently paupers" in the language of the official report. "Apparently paupers" is a phrase of eloquent reserve.

The condition of these people suddenly dropped into a town already overcrowded and notoriously unsanitary can be imagined. Typhus, smallpox and measles broke out among them, so that by June the death-rate had increased by two thousand per cent. above the average of the previous year, according to the Report of the Health Committee, 1847. Eight Catholic priests succumbed during the year to the disease contracted in the course of their ministrations to the unfortunate people.

Thus did the wrong to one nation bring disaster equally to the other. There were further results also prejudicial to both the one race and the other. The workingmen

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both of England and Scotland found the labour market flooded for a while with what, at the time, might be called pauper labour ; and these were the days when Trade Unionism and all the other weapons of labour were still more or less in their infancy. Competition of such a kind was bound to be resented ; the original feeling of latent hostility between the two races was augmented, and for more than a generation the feeling of many large bodies of working people in Lancashire and in Lanarkshire was unfriendly. Difference of religious faith, at an epoch when religious toleration had yet to be learned in its entirety, was added to the other causes of difference. The Irish Catholic, after the manner of his race wherever it may find itself, devoted his first pence to the building of the chapel and the school of his faith ; both were often the object of attack ; and fanatical preachers now and then, preaching for gain in some cases, in some cases even deserters from the faith of their race, added to these flames, and places of worship were not always safe from attack.

It is from this unpromising start that there has grown up the large, loyal and influential Irish settlement in Great Britain of to-day. Gradually, though slowly, many of the race have risen from the abyss in which they first had their dwelling. Some of them, notably Colonel Kyffin Taylor and Alderman Austin Harford of Liverpool, have been most active and successful in improving the terrible housing conditions amid which the Irish dwelt in that now past epoch of their first distressful flight from Ireland ; many have entered the professions ; many of them have attained high positions in the world of commerce ; many

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of them are among the distinguished officers whose skill and bravery helped so powerfully in the War.

Of the many asylums to which the Irish fled after the great exodus of the forties, there was none in which, owing to many circumstances, they were able ultimately to find more favourable surroundings than the Tyneside. It was partly due to the fact that this is so great a centre of the mining industry, and that these Irish exiles were able to find employment immediately, which, though hard in its conditions—and harder then than now—was welcome to men of stalwart frames and great need. I am not imaginative, I think, in saying that the mine has something of the same reconciling spirit as the battle-field; common danger makes comrades and brothers of those who before had been apart by race or creed or class. Anyhow, the Irish miners very soon were able to form the friendliest relations with the English miners of Tyneside. They took part eagerly in the various movements of the Trade Unions to improve the conditions of their class; many of them became officials. Mr. Thomas Burt, the pioneer and the venerated leader of the Trade Union movement on Tyneside, often spoke to me with gratitude of the assistance he got, in the early days of his hard struggles, from the Irishmen of Tyneside. This community of occupation, interest and struggle accounts partially for the fact that in no part of Great Britain have the relations been so friendly and intimate between the two races as on the Tyneside.

But many years had to pass before this reconciliation reached its present completeness. The Irish of the Tyne-

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side took from their environment something of the dourness and determination of the typical Englishman of the north, and brought into his creed, political and religious, a certain additional hardness. When there was a revolutionary movement in Ireland in the sixties the Fenian organiser found much material among the robust Irish miners of Tyneside. I have little doubt that there were Irishmen from Newcastle in some of the encounters which took place in 1867, and onwards, both in England and in Ireland. But the Revolution passed, and its place was taken by the new constitutional movement of which Isaac Butt was the founder, and Parnell the heir. Newcastle Irishmen at once gave their strong adhesion to the new movement; branches of the Irish organisation in Great Britain were founded and well supported. The Irishmen were strong enough even to create an Irish Literary Institute, and some of the men destined to play a prominent part in the Irish movement in later years, such as Mr. Healy and Mr. Barry, began their life as Irish politicians in Newcastle.

Similar things were happening in other great cities of England and Scotland, but in none of these cities did the Irishmen find a factor so immensely powerful in spreading the knowledge of their cause and the defence of their ideals as in Newcastle. At that period in the history of the two countries the two great British Parties were alike in their determined hostility to the things for which the Irishmen of Great Britain, in common with their countrymen at home, were striving. There was at that time literally not one great Englishman—with, perhaps,

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the exception of a few of the Positivist leaders, like Frederic Harrison and Professor Beesly—who was ready to say a word for the Irish cause. Only the insight of political genius, and the reckless courage of a man who cared only for principle and for liberty, could bring forth a man who would step out of the ranks of his countrymen and advocate a cause that was regarded with aversion as disloyal, impracticable, visionary and perilous. But in Newcastle there happened to be such a man. He was a man who could alone, perhaps, at the time, venture on a course so daring, apparently so quixotic and so impossible. But fortunately Joseph Cowen, who proved to be the man for this great mission, had already begun to work the spell of his eloquence on his own people and on his own city.

Joseph Cowen was the son of a Tynesider who had risen from modest beginnings to great wealth and great personal influence; for the wealth was earned in a great industry and was spent freely, even lavishly, in all good causes. The wealthy son of a wealthy father, however, showed little of the ordinary tendencies or opinions of that class. A generous heart, an enthusiastic spirit, a passionate hatred of wrong, a passionate sympathy with the oppressed, and with freedom as their one saviour, placed Joseph Cowen, not in the ranks of the smug well-to-do, but in ardent co-operation with all the apostles of liberty in Europe. His bold spirit did not permit him even to shrink from the companionship and from co-operation with the most daring revolutionary spirits of his time, even though they belonged often to other countries. He became the

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emissary of the men who were then engaged in the struggle to free divided Italy from the grasp of the despotic and fatuous Bourbons, and he often risked liberty—often risked life in being their envoy and messenger to the cities which still lay under the omnipotent sway of soldiers, gendarmes, scaffolds and prisons.

These passionate opinions he extended to the case of the Irish people, then in the abyss of an evil land system. An omnivorous reader, with a rich imagination, quick sympathy, instinctive insight where there was wrong to be redressed, Joseph Cowen devoted many of his early writings and speeches to the encouragement of the Irish cause and to the elucidation of its purposes to his fellow-countrymen. It was a happy coincidence that the brilliant intellectual powers were exactly suited in his case to his opinions and purposes. The fame of an orator is usually evanescent; it is only those who have heard the ringing and hot words from the lips of any orator that can fully realise his power. So, then, the men of this generation can never know what Joseph Cowen was as an orator who never heard him in the living flesh.

This was my privilege, and at an early epoch of his life when the already powerful and popular leader of the democracy of Tyneside began to be known in London and, above all, at Westminster. The new-comer was an object of curiosity, and indeed was not of the type that the Westminster of those days was accustomed to see, still less to welcome. It was the day before there was a great Labour or a great Irish Party. It was still the Westminster of the rigid tall hat and black frock-coat; you

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could almost see the knee-breeches and the silk stockings and the ruffled shirt of the old Knight of the Shire, who was once the only type of member of Parliament underneath all this modern careful formality of dress.

Into this assembly there entered a small man with a suit of sober black, short and square in cut ; with a beard, then also rare ; above all, with a soft round hat—almost an outrage to an assembly that then wore universally the solemn, sleek, tall hat. It was indeed but a few months before that John Martin—an old Irish member who had departed from the usual head-gear—had been summoned to meet a solemn remonstrance from the Speaker of the day. Joseph Cowen looked like a rural Nonconformist Minister entering the solemn conclave of mitred and robed prelates.

But one had only to look at the face of this man to realise that Westminster, though receiving wryly his unconventional appearance, was making acquaintance with one of the unusual minds that are bound to be one of its rulers. The hair was then coal-black ; the complexion was olive ; the eyes were large, dark, at once bright and soft—passionate and yet appealing ; the stature was short. It was genius palpable to any observant eye, but genius deliberately disguised by its framing. This was the figure that burst unexpectedly one night on the House of Commons. And when the new member uttered his first words there was a certain thrill of surprise, for Joseph Cowen to the day of his death spoke in the most pronounced way the burring dialect of Tyneside, and he pronounced many words in such a way as to make them rather difficult

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for a southern ear to understand at once. But the accent, the Nonconformist suit of unfashionably cut clothes, all were soon forgotten as the speaker rolled out his brilliant indictment of the proposal—then hotly contested—of adding an Imperial title to the ancient monarchy of England. When Joseph Cowen sat down he was acclaimed by all sides as one of the foremost orators of the House of Commons.

I am one of those who have persisted in the faith that if push, ambition, appetite for applause, greed, or even love of office and power, had been added to the other qualities of Joseph Cowen, that first brilliant success might have been the first step towards giving to England her first truly democratic leader and Prime Minister. But all these things were foreign to the nature of Joseph Cowen. Though not a Quaker by religious faith, he had much of the Quaker spirit. A certain inner tranquillity lay beneath all the passionate fervour, and this master of vast wealth had the simplest habits and tastes; he might have been as he dressed, a rural and humble Nonconformist clergyman, so far as his expenditure on himself was concerned. To such a man the sordid struggle to which men eager for power and office have to resort, the constant tumult and rancorous combats, the effort to rise from the tiger pit of devouring and conflicting ambitions—to such a man all these things were impossible.

There were many changes in political life during Joseph Cowen's career. Now and then he found himself at variance with some of the opinions of the Liberal Party. His variance on their Irish policy of coercion

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was keen, vigorous and eloquent, and helped to consolidate the strong ties between him and his Irish fellow-citizens on Tyneside. He was one of the seven men who stood up in the House of Commons in final protest against the measure of the Government ; and even in the days when the Irish Nationalists were in the fiercest opposition to the Liberal Ministry of the period, Joseph Cowen was regarded as a staunch friend who had to be excluded from the Irish ban on Liberal representatives.

Apart from his services to the Irish people by his speeches in Parliament, Mr. Cowen gave them powerful aid by his continuous advocacy—often by his own pen—in the powerful newspapers he controlled. This single Englishman became at once the rallying point of the British democratic and the Irish forces in the Tyneside city, and the fraternal bonds which unite the two races there and all around to-day—of which striking evidence will soon be given—are to a large extent the spiritual and political heritage he left to his city, and are also an enduring monument of his genius and of his influence.

When the Great War came, the time of test came also to this new relation between the English and the Irish citizens of the Tyneside. The Irish proved as eager as their fellow-citizens to contribute their share to the defence of the Empire, and of the principles of freedom and democracy to which they had always given their adhesion. A proposal was made that there should be an Irish battalion in the Northumberland Fusiliers. It was a proposal that should at once have been accepted, but the ancient traditions of the old and professional Army

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of the past still survived sufficiently to get any such proposal rejected. Fortunately for Newcastle, and fortunately for the country, there was in the city the son of Joseph Cowen, not only bearing the same name, but heir to the traditions of his father. Like his father, at once democratic and Imperialist—with a combination of love and sympathy for the masses and of eager and vehement patriotism which was to be found in the eclectic gospel of his father—like his father, young Joseph Cowen—as the friends and contemporaries of his father still love to call him—felt that wealth was useful only when applied to great public purposes. He made a prompt offer of ten thousand pounds to equip three Newcastle battalions : one Irish, one Scotch, one Newcastle. The offer stirred up the whole of the city to patriotic impulse. It was fortunate for the Irish of Newcastle at the moment that there were in the city many men of their own race and of great position.

The Lord Mayor was a sturdy Ulster man of business—Johnstone Wallace ; his successor was also an Irishman—Alderman Fitzgerald ; one was an Irish Protestant, the other an Irish Catholic. They were brought together by the common fight of European Christianity against the pagan savagery of Germany. A great scientific Irishman—heir to great scientific family tradition—the Hon. Sir Charles Parsons, the inventor of the great revolution epitomised in the word turbine—had been for years a citizen of Newcastle. Another scientific Irishman, Mr. Gerald Stoney, son of the brilliant secretary of my old University, was also a dweller in Newcastle. Men like

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Mr. Peter Bradley, Mr. Felix Lavery, and others represented the old Nationalist body. All these joined forces with equal enthusiasm in this great effort to place Newcastle in the position among the fighting forces of the Empire which its size, wealth, intelligence and great history entitled it to occupy. Every one in the city took up the movement with the same enthusiasm ; it became a city passion—a city mission—a city cry.

Mr. Cowen, meantime, and the other newspaper proprietors of the city, gave to the movement all their resources. Mr. Cowen offered an even more valuable contribution in adding to the movement the unstinted labour of his indefatigable, shrewd, silent, inexhaustible business manager and managing editor—Colonel Joseph Reed. A meeting was held, which, addressed by Lord Donoughmore, an Irish Unionist peer, and myself, was a further embodiment of that unity of all parties and all nationalities in the defence of the Empire.

The War Office at last moved, and the recruiting began. It came on with all the force and almost fury of a dammed stream. Men rolled in, not in tens or hundreds, but soon in thousands. Gallant and eager young Irishmen battered at the doors of the recruiting office. In a short time there were five thousand five hundred men of either Irish birth or Irish origin enrolled. No city in the Empire had rolled up so many men in such a short time. And this success, far greater than the most sanguine could expect, was further facilitated by the addition of another five thousand pounds to the ten already given by Mr. Joseph Cowen.

There I leave for the moment the story of the Irish

GREAT IRISHMEN

battalions of the Northumberland Fusiliers. But before I have done I think it right to sum up to-day the position and the attitude of that large and powerful section of the Celtic race that is represented by the Irishmen in Great Britain. I have set forth rapidly and without passion the many phases through which the Irish in Great Britain have passed from their early beginnings as combatants in the field and champions in the more peaceful conquest of England and Scotland by the new light of Christianity, to the days when a gigantic national calamity drove them in tens of thousands for asylum to the English and Scotch shores. It is a sad, a tragic, a humiliating history—but there is this final word to be said, that the tragedy and the blackness of it all are receding under the influence of time and energy and the broader human spirit of our days. That inauspicious opening, which came with the Irish exodus, is disappearing from sight. What is more important, it is disappearing from vengeful memory. The result is one of the paradoxes of the always paradoxical Irish problem. As they have receded from the slum, as the second and third generation have pushed their way to the front, as the intercommunion among the two peoples has jumped the original gulf of race, creed and class, as the Irish in Great Britain have mingled freely in common union with their British fellow-citizens, in the mart, in the Council Chamber, in the labour organisations, they have, while retaining their ineffaceable national characteristics, their immutable convictions and indestructible aspirations—they have nevertheless taken on something of the British environment. And thus the Irishman in

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Great Britain, while remaining so thoroughly and fervidly Irish, has a certain psychology which makes a distinction between his point of view and that of his race elsewhere. The first note of this difference is that the Irishman in Great Britain knows, understands, realises and admires the Englishman and the Scotsman among whom he lives. To the Irishman who has never left the Irish shores, the Englishman, by a fallacious generalisation, was embodied, not in his own personal character, but in the regime which was supposed to support and to represent him. The red-coated soldier who helped to evict the shrieking men and women who clung to their homes, the policemen, Irish by birth but English by employment, the mighty fleet and the great army that seemed to stand behind all the agencies that oppressed him, helped to create in the Irish mind an image of the Englishman which is too wide of veracity to be called even a caricature. The Irishman in Great Britain knows the Englishman as he really is in flesh and blood, and understands as well—perhaps even better than the Englishman himself—the goodness of heart, the generosity of spirit, the love of fair play, the hatred of wrong, the sympathy with the oppressed, which underlie the Englishman's exterior of shy reserve and superficial frigidity. And thus, then, the Irishman in Great Britain occupies a curious middle place between the nationality to which he belongs and the race among which he lives. He understands and he supports with his time, his energy, his vote, his generous contribution out of small incomes, the struggle of his land and his people. At the same time, while he understands the

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Englishman and the English point of view, he is able to see the difficulties which stand between Ireland and her aspirations in their entanglement with English politics and English conditions. He is more patient, more tolerant, more indulgent, if I may venture on the word, broader in his outlook than his countryman who has never left the shores of Ireland and never dwelt among the English people.

This attitude of mind might have foretold to any clear observer the attitude which the Irish in Great Britain would take up when the Great War came. It was an attitude which had been prepared for generations by the events I have hurriedly sketched. Moreover, the principles for which Irishmen had fought all their lives were revealed to them, as in a flash, as the great spiritual and fundamental issues of the war. They had fought for a small nation; they had fought for the principle of nationality; they had fought for democracy; they had fought for liberty; they had lived in a land where—whatever might be the case in their own country—the freedom of the individual and the representative character of the institutions brought home to them the essential spirit of freedom which lies at the heart of the British Empire.

Meetings of Irishmen, larger in many cases than ever held before, took place in all the great Irish centres—in London, in Liverpool, in Manchester, in Glasgow, in Newcastle. At every meeting, without even a whisper of dissent and amid scenes of striking enthusiasm, the Irish in Great Britain pledged their support to the just

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cause of Great Britain and her Allies. The meetings were followed by a rallying of the Irish in Great Britain to the fighting forces which astounded even those who thought they knew them best. I have told the story of Newcastle, but it is the story of other centres as well. In the mining villages of Scotland, which are largely inhabited by Irish settlers, there was not a house that did not send its boy to the front. From Lancashire towns they poured out in tens of thousands. I have heard the number of Irish recruits from Lancashire put down at as high a figure as one hundred thousand. Evidence, at once painful and glorious, of the largeness of the contribution of the Irish in Great Britain to the fighting forces, comes to us inside the Irish movement in this country, in thinned congregations in our chapels and broken branches of our organisation. These Irish recruits from our Irish population in Great Britain went to the front of their own free will; the vast majority of them had joined before the conscription law was passed or, perhaps, even contemplated. What these Irish soldiers did on the many battle fronts I leave other chroniclers to tell. The story is already well known.

Such, then, are we, the Irish of Great Britain. United, unanimous, we stood by the Allies with our hearts and with our brave children. That was our position at the beginning of the war; that is our position now. We are unchanged; we are unchangeable.

T. P. O'CONNOR.

IRISH POLITICAL LEADERS

IRISH POLITICAL LEADERS

ISAAC BUTT

ISAAC BUTT was leader of the first Irish parliamentary party that attempted to crystallise all the heaven-sweeping national ideals of Ireland into a single demand for Home Rule, a principle within practical, everyday possibilities. Usually the imagination of a people is only captured by an idea which is so sublime in conception as to be unlimited in its promise of blessings, and utterly impossible to realise in ordinary life. Still, Home Rule included the restoration of the Irish Parliament on College Green, and the vision of that ancient symbol of nationhood rising once again in the glorious sunburst of Erin's freedom, surrounded the demand for Home Rule with a shining grandeur that won the soul of Ireland. With fiery enthusiasm, Irish men and women all over the world acclaimed Butt as their leader.

Unfortunately, while the principle to be advocated was definite, the policy to give it effect was indefinite.

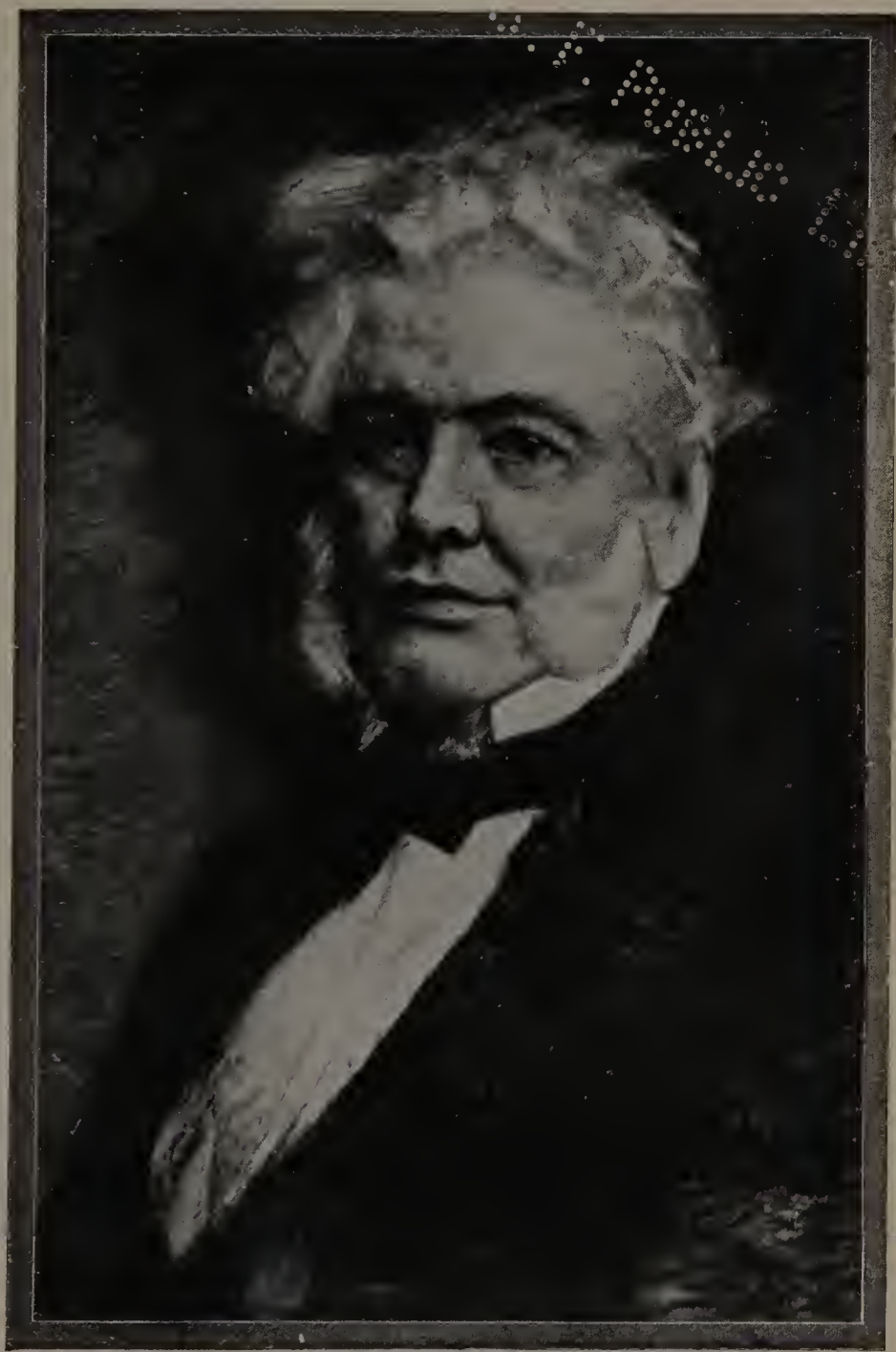
The mind of an oppressed people is merciless towards a mistake in political generalship ; and Butt's gentle tactics ended in a tragedy that broke his heart.

GREAT 'IRISHMEN

Butt was born at Stranorlar, Co. Donegal, in 1813. His father, being a protestant clergyman, educated the son in a religious atmosphere which influenced him, at the beginning of his public life, to support the ascendancy party in Ireland. Yet when his understanding had ripened, the sincerity and honesty of the man made him the declared advocate of his suffering catholic fellow-countrymen. He was one of the almost countless protestants who, inspired by a hatred of wrong-doing and a love of justice, have endured the hard fate of defending catholics and nationalists against the iniquity of British government in Ireland. Indeed, protestantism has always been so much a part of nationalism in that country that only dishonest men who dread some small personal loss dare to assert that nationalism has a religious meaning, and only those who are ignorant believe them.

Butt took up law as a profession, and politics as a career. In May, 1852, he was elected for Harwich as a liberal-conservative, an indication that his political horizon was misty at that period.

His services at the Bar were always in demand, with large fees marked on his briefs as a reward. He appeared to gain all his knowledge without study, and was famous for his power of putting the important facts of a case before the court with convincing mastery, though he might scarcely have had time to do more than glance at a brief. He puzzled judge and jury with elaborate and detailed expositions, and the skill with which he stated his strongest arguments and pierced the weak ones of his opponents, when it was well known that the materials



ISAAC BUTT.

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which he was using had only been put into his hands a few hours previously.

His nature was lovable, with a disposition for gaiety which made him as playful and as fond of fun as a child. In addition, his generosity was so great that he placed no value on money as a personal possession. He gave it away recklessly, a practice that hampered himself as much as it helped others. It was said that, although big fees were being paid him, there were times when he could scarcely pay his hotel bill and travelling expenses to the courts where he happened to be pleading. Again, even on such embarrassing occasions, if his clients were badly off, their private sorrows awakened his sympathy to such an extent that he would refuse to take any fee, although he was so pressed for money at the time himself. His private story is almost typical of the romantic, chivalrous Irishman, for ever getting into odd monetary difficulties and getting out of them smilingly, helping others when he ought to be taking care of himself and scattering his income and his brilliant intellectual gifts with haphazard extravagance. He had no personal enemies. No unkind word is spoken of him. He was a simple, great man.

For a time he withdrew from the Bar and took up literature. Then, from 1865 to 1871, he gave up parliament altogether, and devoted his time entirely to the task of establishing his commercial affairs on a sound basis by earning an assured income at the Bar once more.

In that seeming uncertainty of purpose is hidden the secret of a conflict between the rare man's wishes and the ordinary man's necessities. Butt's inclinations were for

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the imaginative life where his soul could be free to dwell among the heights of great activities. Mere lack of money compelled him to be active on the lower slopes of earning a living which, from his point of view, was a greater waste of time and ability than the extravagant generosity of which he had been accused.

If he had had the necessary share of guile which is indispensable as an element of worldly advancement, he might have achieved the Irish lord chancellorship. He did not even become a member of the government. His sincerity and simplicity were fatal obstacles to such promotion.

Despite his financial difficulties, he was creating a reputation for himself in Ireland as one whose eloquence and intellectual gifts amounted to the genius that makes a man a leader.

In 1871 he contested Limerick as an out and out liberal, which might be read as a sign that his sympathies were definitely leading him from the shabby narrowness of tory prejudice and class interests to the broad highway of principle and universal justice.

When he returned to parliament, a liberal government was firmly in power. The Irish Church was disestablished, and some attempt at reforming Irish land laws had been made. The government, like its predecessor, whether liberal or tory, had done nothing at all as far as Irish political and national freedom was concerned, except to stamp out savagely and horribly the last flicker of life in Fenianism, which, since the failure of O'Connell's repeal movement and the Young Ireland party, had been the only organised

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body left to aim at destroying root and branch British rule in Ireland.

Fenianism relied on armed force to win the national freedom for which Ireland always was and always will be ready to martyr herself. Freedom to the national spirit of Ireland is what Heaven is to her soul.

When Fenianism had failed, and all hope from armed revolution in Ireland was over for the time being, a constitutional association arose immediately from the ruins, with the object of restoring the old Irish parliament and its traditional rights of managing the affairs of the country without interference from the British parliament.

Butt, in the maturity of his intellectual development, espoused the cause of Irish nationalism heart and soul. He became the leader of the new movement. It was called the Home Rule Association or Confederation. His eloquence and ability attracted Irishmen of all classes—farmers, labourers, shopkeepers and professional and commercial men—to his side. The fervour of his agitation extended the movement to Great Britain where, in Manchester, 1873, he was elected president of the British wing of the association.

Great hopes were rising in Irish hearts once more. The new movement was becoming a power in England, Scotland and Wales. It linked up the democracy of Ireland for the first time with the other three democracies; and with a leader of Butt's superb gifts of oratory and statesmanship there seemed to be every likelihood that a liberal government, for the sake of both principle and expediency, would concede to a widespread, sustained constitutional

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demand what had been denied to the desperate but fitful and misdirected blows of physical force.

Butt's policy was to make appeals for justice, and wait silently after promises were made—and broken—by the government, as in the case of catholic emancipation. The word of honour of British statesmen became the byword of British yokels laughing in the taverns. In spite of Butt's eloquence and genius, a conservative government came into power before, of course, the liberals had found time to redeem their pledges to set Ireland free. The soundness of liberal principles was no security for a liberal government's pledges.

Bitter disappointment took the place of the high hopes which had filled Irish hearts. Butt was blamed for not having done what no man on earth could have done ; that was—make a British cabinet minister keep a promise without the power to drive him out of office.

Butt's policy of appeal and patience had failed. A new policy of denunciation and political violence had been initiated by Parnell. In 1877, at Liverpool, Butt was deposed from the presidency of the Home Rule Association of Great Britain ; and, in the following year, was virtually forsaken politically by the nationalists of Ireland who had lost all confidence in his leadership.

Political disaster came as a crown of thorns to a life of perpetual struggle on a high plane. His health gave way. Vexation of spirit embittered and darkened his sunny nature. His mental powers revealed the terrible strain which he had endured for so many years, and softening of the brain attacked him. He lingered for two years, unable

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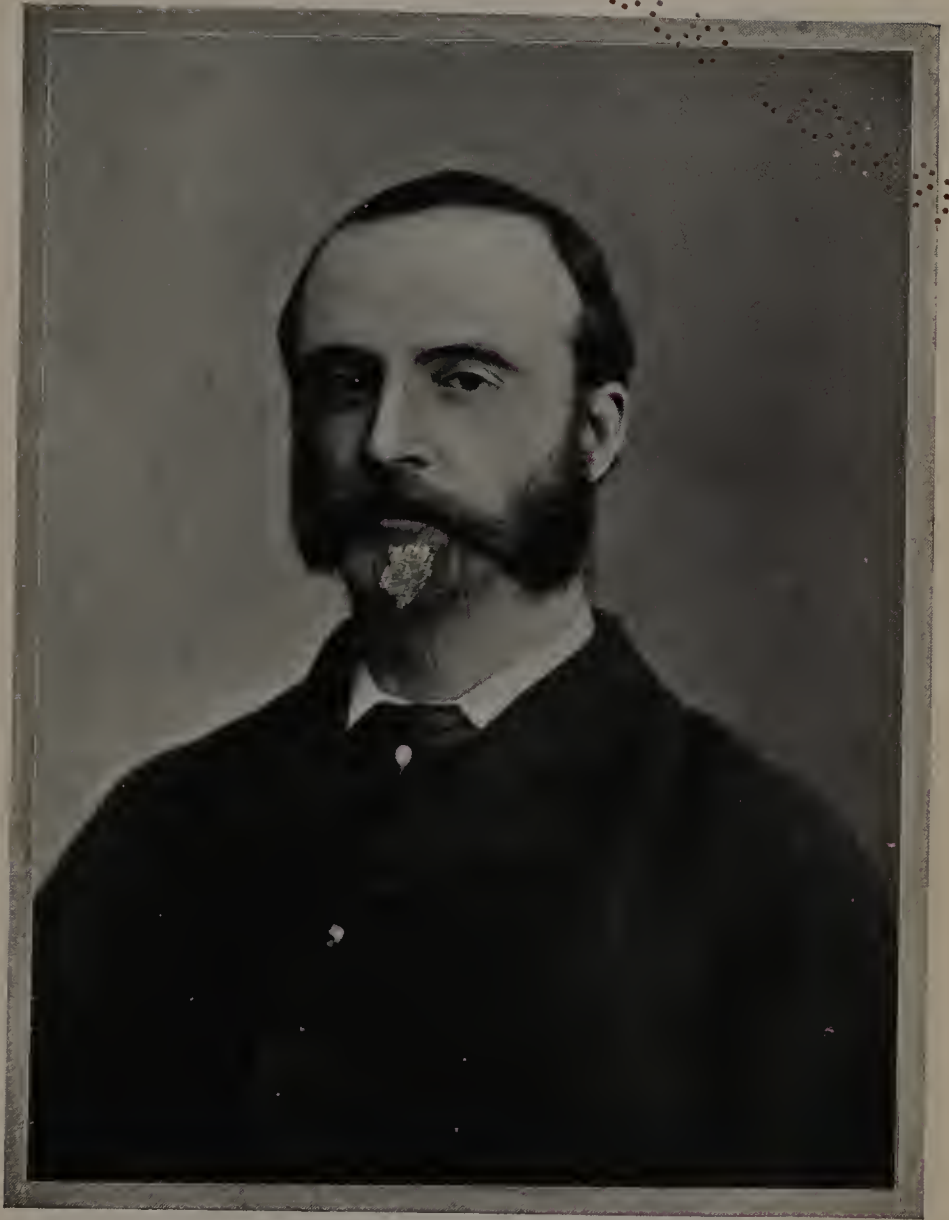
to attend parliament, or take any part in politics. Soon he became unconscious of what was transpiring about him. His affliction was fatal. He died after having given all his genius in its brightest days to the service of his country. He sacrificed himself to the ideal which had always filled his secret life like the light of a vision, and he will always live in the gratitude and admiration of his compatriots.

JOSEPH KEATING.

PARNELL

UNTIL the middle of the nineteenth century, the horrible function of killing Irish leaders for their admirable qualities had been the absolute monopoly of the British government. But Charles Stewart Parnell, following Isaac Butt who, in turn, came after Daniel O'Connell, well-beloved leaders of the nation, all were slain by ~~the~~ herself, in a frenzy of anguish comparable to the state of mind in which a devoted mother, distracted by unbearable sorrow and suffering, might destroy her own children. In the myths of Greek gods are trilogies of tragedies where the people of doom must die by their own acts, or those of their nearest kin, for the unfathomable purpose of fate. The Irish trilogy uses no bloodstained swords, it wears no crown or purple robes, and no thunderbolts voice the decree of fate. But ordinary as it may appear to be, the clearest explanation still leaves its meaning in the gloom of mystery.

Of the three tragedies, Parnell's was supreme. O'Connell and Butt broke their hearts at an age when the time of waning had come upon their magnificent abilities, and they were too exhausted to carry on the struggle against the merciless realities of public life. Parnell's fall sent a shudder through the world. It came at the



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.

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terrible moment when he had reached the most exalted heights in the admiration of his race, and his genius was in full flower. He was almost worshipped by his people. His power seemed to be miraculous. He had none of the tangible gifts that help to make a popular hero, such as outstanding physique, a fine voice, or burning eloquence. All his greatness seemed to come from what he actually did. Action itself surrounded his personality with a magnetism that drew all the elements to him. He held Ireland united in his hand. When disaster loosened his grip, the nation fell shattering in fragments about him. His was a sheer personal leadership. Without the personality, the following lost all sense of direction, and Ireland has been wandering in the wilderness ever since. He had no equal as a leader in the history of Ireland or of any other nation. Butt had not attained more than acknowledged leadership. O'Connell, on the other hand, filled the hearts and minds of his countrymen to such an extent that he could attract millions of devotees from all parts of the country to any spot where he might be, merely for the privilege of seeing him and hearing him speak. Yet Parnell, without O'Connell's eloquence or wit, was a greater leader. Parnell was so great that his people would not believe that he could die like any ordinary man. The tradition that he yet lives exists to-day, just as the agony felt by the nation at the first news of his death still endures.

Parnell was born at Avondale, Co. Wicklow, in June, 1846, when the worst famine which Ireland had ever known was raging at its greatest violence, and destroying men, women and children by hunger and disease; while the

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British government, basing its right to rule life and death in that country upon the law of invasion and conquest, instead of relieving the distress, increased it by sending police and soldiers with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets to evict families from farmhouses where rackrents would not be collected; and the London "Times" newspaper was thanking God for the frightful visitation which was helping to clear the Irish out of Ireland. Nature had become an ally of the patrons of the "Times," the empire makers, the secret assassins of democracies. There was hope at last; for, although misrule and oppression had held Ireland in their polluted embrace for nearly a thousand years, they had not yet succeeded in stifling her struggles to be free. But the blessing of famine and pestilence, said the "Times," piously, would end the good work.

Parnell's family were well-to-do landowners; and, as Irish landlords were traditionally the cruellest enemies of the peasantry, all the brighter glory surrounds the chivalry and humanity which made him one of the best friends that the poor Irish people ever had. Further, it is important to understand that the man who developed into the most remarkable and powerful opponent of British rule in Ireland ever known, came of English stock on the paternal side; while his mother was American, a daughter of Admiral Charles Stewart who had fought against England in the war of 1814.

Parnell was brought up in the protestant faith, and was yet another instance of the fact, unwelcome to charlatans, that a genuine link unites catholic and protestant nationalism.

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From youth to manhood he was educated in English private schools, ending at Magdalene College, Cambridge.

His entirely English training had, later on, an extraordinary value in shaping his attitude towards mentally deficient members of the ministerial gang, who assumed a British parliament to be a superior kind of Heaven, and worshipped themselves as the Joves of Ireland's destinies. He had been through what was regarded as the education of English gentlemen, which consists chiefly of learning how to despise each other ; and, having mixed with those stiff officials on equal terms, he knew how little was behind the lath and plaster, gave them the full benefit of his English education, and despised them. That attitude might have had something to do with the uneasy impression which prompted Gladstone to say that Parnell was the only man who could make the House of Commons shiver with a look.

After leaving the University, he travelled widely, spent some years in America with relatives, and returned to Avondale to take up the life of an ordinary landed proprietor. His chief personal interest appeared to be mechanical science, and he showed no inclination for public life until 1874, when he offered to contest Co. Wicklow as a nationalist.

There was no hesitancy in his choice of the green flag, though the standard of the Union had a wider variety of attractive colours in it for other men whose ambitions were stronger than their principles. He was guided by the spirit of his family, as beheld in the self-sacrifice of his great-grandfather, John Parnell, who was Chancellor

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of the Exchequer in the Irish parliament, and threw up his post rather than put his signature to the Act of Union which ruined Ireland. Parnell's mother was suspected of being in sympathy with the Fenians, and of sheltering them. The ancestral home of Parnell at Avondale, including Mrs. Parnell's bedroom, had been searched by the police for the fugitive Fenians. Parnell never forgave the government for that insult. It was also said that the fate of three Irish patriots, Allen, Larkin and O'Brien, who were judicially murdered by the Government at Manchester, 1867, had influenced his mind deeply.

But his intention to stand for Wicklow was not carried out. He was High Sheriff of the county. The government would not accept his resignation and the law would not permit him to be a parliamentary candidate in his own shire.

Soon afterwards, he was chosen as the candidate of the Home Rule party for Co. Dublin against a government nominee.

In addressing his first public meeting, Parnell broke down utterly from nervousness, a remarkable thing in a man who had within him potentialities that might have caused the downfall of an empire. He lost the seat. But his social position, combined with his nationalism, made him too valuable to be overlooked, and in the following year, at the death of John Mitchell, who had represented Meath, Parnell was elected as a member of the British House of Commons.

He attended Parliament regularly, voted often, but spoke seldom, was hardly noticed, and for some time gave

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no indication of being more than a member of parliament.

Early in the first session of 1877, he and a few other members opposed the government, and kept the House sitting into the small hours of the morning. From that time onward Parnell's activity in parliament became more and more intense. He forced amendments on the government at three o'clock of a morning, with the House in an uproar of excited resentment at his conduct. On the South African Bill, he, mainly supported by Joseph Biggar, who represented Cavan, kept the debate going from the afternoon of July 31 to the afternoon of August 1—twenty-six hours without a break.

In that memorable session of 1877, Parnell was fighting the battle of the British rank and file. He attacked the Army and Navy Bill which had many dark features ; and after a bitter struggle succeeded in abolishing the lash and triangle as instruments of torture intended to inspire a sense of discipline in the terrified souls of British soldiers and sailors. They would shed their blood in floggings no more. Even for the felons he fought, as in the case of the Prisons Bill, and wrested from inhuman discipline more human treatment for all in British prisons ; while in the Factories and Workshops Bill of 1878, Parnell remembered the poor children and underpaid men and women workers ; and in the long and fierce fight to make their hard lot endurable he showed his grand sympathies with the distressed of all nationalities. He had the universal heart.

Interference by Irish members with purely British legislation was much resented. The House, ignoring the fact

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that it was a British parliament, for ever interfering with purely Irish affairs, called the conduct of Parnell obstruction.

Partly, the charge was false. Parnell did not often make the mistake of taking action without a strictly parliamentary reason for it. He defended the poor against the rich, and opposed nothing but injustice.

Protecting the helpless and fighting injustice were what the House of Commons called obstruction, and in that policy Parnell, aided well by Biggar, persisted, preventing to the uttermost extent of his power any bad bill—and there was rarely ever legislation of any other kind proposed—from passing to the statute book. His endless amendments wearied and infuriated liberal and tory members alike. They shouted evil names at him, called him a curse to the House, and shook their fists at him with oaths of vengeance, amid scenes of disorder that made the House of Commons seem to be a house of madmen. Even his own leader, Isaac Butt, appalled by the fury of wrath about him, rose in his seat and denounced the conduct of his colleague as outrageous.

Parnell went on unmoved. He was a tall, bearded man, statuesque in bearing, with a steady, unyielding look in a clear-cut, handsome face that seemed to be made of pallid marble, except when, in rare moments of wounded pride, the lightning of startling passion flashed from his glance. Censure, attempts at humiliating him or punishing him, threats of expulsion from party by his friends or from parliament by his foes, had no effect on him. With untiring energy and amazing skill in picking

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out the weaknesses and evils of measures, he kept the House debating and dividing all night, again and again without rest or sleep, marching it through the lobbies on perpetual motions that the Speaker should leave the chair, that the House should adjourn, leading it to the doleful dance by the dead hand of any parliamentary gag, until the government was foaming at the mouth with impotent rage, the ministerial press howling for Parnell's blood, and the whole country aflame with excitement at the wild storms which were supposed to be shaking to destruction the utter foundations of parliament.

All the violence of the outburst was directed at Parnell, the clearest proof that his genius and resource were responsible for the sensational happenings which had carried his name to the ends of the world in so short a time. Most of the newspapers denounced him as a criminal. In fact, from that period, an official plot was set going to convict him of being associated with the desperate remnants of Fenianism, who were supplementing his constitutionalism by trying to blow up London and other cities with dynamite.

His extraordinary policy was originally intended to improve legislation, but realising that the government had no intention of doing anything for the benefit of his country, his purpose gradually developed into the definite idea that the only answer to the refusal of Home Rule for Ireland was to refuse Home Rule to England. Beyond that, the fact that he eventually created a new party indicates that in his fine brain was, also, a profound constructive purpose.

He seemed to have made up his mind that no good could

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ever come out of the pacific attitude of his party towards the horrors of misrule in Ireland. His leader, Butt, had no taste for political violence; while the bulk of the Home Rule members, relying on ministerial promises, and following a policy of being grateful for what they had not received, had degenerated into parliamentary slaves. They appealed to the government not to continue murdering Ireland, and acquiesced in the crime by their torpid silence. They had no real interest in nationality. Their interest was in commerce and finance. They were landlords, bankers, merchants and barristers. All held aloof from Parnell, except Biggar, who supported him jubilantly.

Often Biggar and Parnell were fighting the entire government and, at times, the whole House of Commons, absolutely alone.

Biggar himself was a remarkable member. He had discovered a method of annoying parliament by spying strangers in the House when they had been officially invited there, and such warning by a member involved their immediate ejection. Once he espied the Prince of Wales in the gallery, and His Highness was compelled to withdraw. Government journals described Biggar as a deformed goblin, only one degree less dangerous than Parnell.

No one could define the secret of Parnell's mastery over the House of Commons. Nothing so astounding had ever been known there before. All that could be said was that he was fearless in manner, calm in the midst of the wildest storms, with a power of saying exactly what he meant. But to this must be added an imaginative mind, the gift of looking upwards at a principle, from the

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root to the flower, as may be seen in his answer to the question, as to how far Ireland wanted to go, that no man could put bounds to the march of a nation. Without that gift, the sure grip which he had upon his own plan of action would have been an impossibility.

His unpopularity in England brought him popularity beyond exaggeration in his own country. His activity was hailed by nationalist Ireland as a new era of hope. He was the great leader whom Erin had been waiting for, the enchanted champion who had the heart to feel, the brain to plan, and the courage to dare all and fear nothing in the fight for Irish liberty. Every attempt of parliament to censure, punish or humiliate him only brightened his glory in the eyes of his countrymen and countrywomen.

Even before that year closed, the Irish of Great Britain chose him as their president of the Home Rule Confederation, in place of Butt ; and in the following January, 1878, at the Dublin conference, a struggle broke out between Parnellites and Buttitites. Butt wished the Home Rule party to declare that, while it should remain pledged to act independently of British parties, no Home Rule member should persevere in any course of action which his colleagues decided was injurious to the cause. Butt failed to carry his point, and shortly afterwards, realising by the course of events that the whole country favoured the new policy, he retired. Another leader, Shaw, a whig-liberal-nationalist, tried to brush back the rising tide. He was soon overwhelmed and Parnell became Leader.

In 1879, he was elected president of the Land League which had been organised by Michael Davitt, the greatest

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of all Fenians, who, while in prison under a sentence of fourteen years' penal servitude, had conceived a plan for winning the land for the people, and had brought his idea to maturity in Ireland. Davitt's Land League had become powerful beyond all expectations. Not only were the millions of Irish farmers and labourers of Ireland enrolled in its ranks, but nearly all the Irish in Great Britain, America and the Colonies as well. And Parnell, as president, found he had in his hand ready for use the most formidable political weapon which the world had ever seen.

In that year famine once more threatened the people. Harvests had been bad. On the potato crop alone there had been a loss of seven million pounds; and hunger, disease and heartless evictions, by which poor families were flung out on the roadsides to die, were devastating the country. The government merely fed the land with more soldiers, protected those who had shelter, and relieved only those who were not in want—the poor rich, over-fed landlords who were so full that they were sending shiploads of food out of the country to pay the rents while the people were dying of starvation.

Parnell decided to turn the Land League into a relief organisation, and, with John Dillon, sailed to America on a public tour, in order to enlist sympathy for the national cause, and provide material aid in money and food for the famishing peasantry at home.

The two were greeted in the New World with military parades, public and official receptions, and demonstrations of popular enthusiasm everywhere, as ambassadors of the Irish race; and, in three

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months, funds were raised amounting to nearly twenty-five thousand pounds.

In 1880 parliament was dissolved suddenly.

Parnell returned to Ireland at once and plunged into the elections, waging relentless war not only against the tories but against the nominal Home Rulers. He lost four seats and won fourteen, and went back to parliament at the head of a party of sixty-four, which he afterwards increased to eighty-four, pledged to remain independent, and to refuse office under the government until Ireland had a parliament of her own.

Gladstone was the new prime minister. He offered Ireland conciliation and gave her coercion. He put Parnell under arrest in November, with other land leaguers, but refrained from packing the jury, and in December Parnell was released.

More coercion followed in the New Year. Parnell fought it remorselessly, as only he could. There was turmoil in parliament and murder in Ireland.

Parnell was arrested once more, and flung into Kilmainham gaol on the foul and foolish charge of inciting outrages.

Within a few months the government had arrested nearly three thousand persons in Ireland for political offences. But disorders increased instead of lessened under the vindictive madness of the government, and in March, 1881, the chief secretary for Ireland, confessing that his policy was a wretched failure, resigned, a broken man, while Parnell came out of prison with his reputation as a leader higher than ever.

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Then followed the terrible Phoenix Park affair.

The new chief secretary and a colleague were murdered by members of an Irish secret society known as the Invincibles.

Parnell denounced the crimes and offered to give up his leadership, in a letter to Gladstone, who rejected the proposal.

The triumph of Parnell's policy came in 1886, when, with his party of eighty-four active, talented Irishmen, he had the means in his hand of dictating to the government, and Gladstone's first Home Rule bill was read in parliament. But the judases of the liberal party betrayed their master, and the bill was defeated on June 7th, 1886.

Less than a year later, on April 18th, 1887, the official plot to convict Parnell of murder blossomed red from the hangman's tree. The first of the "Times" forgeries appeared.

A letter was published, printed in facsimile, and declared to have been signed by Parnell, revealing him as an accomplice in the Phoenix Park outrage. Other letters followed, with the same evil intention of transferring Parnell from Westminster to the criminal dock on trial for his life.

The plot failed. A commission of inquiry was appointed, and Pigott, the forger of the letters, confessing his crime shot himself to avoid punishment. The "Times" which had paid Pigott with handfuls of gold, was shielded from justice by Salisbury's government. The intention of the "Times" had been bad, but its failure was worse; yet the government was merciful, and forgave even the failure.

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Parnell, conquering everywhere, vanquishing all his powerful enemies, was at the shining pinnacle of his glory, with all the Irish race around him and looking up to him as their national saviour, wondrous hope and almost adoration in their eyes. He had sacrificed his private fortune in his generosity to his tenants and in his work for the cause. He had created a new Irish parliamentary party pledged to fight for national freedom, first and last, and for that noble prize alone. He had united all the children of the motherland all over the world in one supreme league. He had made Ireland a nation in power as well as name. The light upon him was too dazzling for mortal vision.

Then the shadow fell that darkened him and all his people.

What the poisoned gold of his enemies could not do in the criminal courts was done in the divorce court. The woman was the wife of one, named O'Shea, who had previously been a member of the Irish party. Parnell refused to defend himself, the verdict that banished him from public life was pronounced, and a majority of his party opposed his leadership.

He offered to retire if Gladstone, who was still prime minister, would give guarantees that a Home Rule bill, satisfactory to Ireland, would be passed by his government.

Gladstone refused.

Upon that Parnell determined to remain leader.

He would listen to no suggestion of compromise. His unparalleled services to Ireland spoke for him. Loyal friends fought for him, dividing the country into two opposing armies. He defied the world. The stupendous

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energy, by which he had accomplished such wonders for his country's cause against its cruellest enemies, was spent in the struggle. The fire burnt itself out. The sentence of the courts was like a black decree of fate upon him, and he died fighting.

At the age of forty-five he was dead.

The last breath passed from him on the seventh day of October, 1891, at Brighton ; and on the following Sunday he was taken to Ireland, with a procession, several thousand strong, marching behind their dead leader from Kingstown to the City Hall, Dublin, where the coffin, almost invisible under heaped-up wreaths, lay in state during the morning. Thirty thousand people went sorrowfully past the remains in three hours ; and, outside, multitudes, countless thousands of mourners, bare-headed and weeping, thronged every street leading to the building. The same day he was taken to Glasnevin cemetery where many famous Irishmen, but none so wonderful as he, are lying. The funeral procession was three and a half miles long. When the light of day was waning, he was lowered into the soil from which he had sprung. Erin, the adored mother, had given him life, and she took him in her arms at the end. Above his grave his loyal colleagues solemnly renewed their pledges to be true to the task which he had begun and had not been granted the grace to finish, the glorious duty of achieving freedom for his native land. Few there could keep back the tears that rose when the burial service was read in the evening shadows. Then came the darkness of night and the silence of a great death, of a giant at rest, the eternal silence of a proud, mighty

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hero who had filled the world with the clash and roar of battle against the intolerable ignorance and cruelty of a government that would set bounds to the destiny of his nation.

JOSEPH KEATING.

J. E. REDMOND

MR. JOHN REDMOND was born in the county of Wexford, and belonged to that comparatively small class in Irish life which retained some ownership of the soil, and, at the same time, had remained catholic. These two facts influenced both his character and his career.

Wexford was the leading county in the Irish rebellion of 1798. The battle of Vinegar Hill was fought within its borders, and all through history it has been the spot where rulers had to expect trouble. Mr. Redmond was a representative Wexford man—intensely Irish though he had little of the characteristic Irishman's manner. He was cold, self-restrained in demeanour and in speech. His features were typically Irish; the aquiline nose, the high cheeks, the small mouth, the rather protruding eyes, were not in the least Celtic; indeed, the public man of his times to whom he bore the closest physical resemblance was the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

Similarly, his connection with the smaller landed gentry made him less of the fierce and relentless enemy of the landlord class than, for instance, Michael Davitt, who was the son of a small farmer evicted from his home while a child. Thus it was that Mr. Redmond occasionally found

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himself out of touch with some of his closest associates, sometimes with a good many of his countrymen. He had little of the winning good-fellowship which is so common among the entirely Celtic type of Irishman; he excited respect and confidence rather than enthusiasm.

His connection, though slight, with the land brought him no personal advantage, for when the time came for him to inherit the family estate the debts exceeded the income; and the estate had to be sold. Personal enemies criticised with the unfairness of political controversy the terms of the sale; as a matter of fact they were quite equitable, and Mr. Redmond was not a penny the richer. Besides, he was personally disinterested to a degree almost of chivalry in all pecuniary matters; he knew the value of money, for he was essentially a careful and unostentatious man, but he never overestimated it, and over and over again threw all consideration of it aside in pursuance of his duty to Ireland.

The family had long association with the public life of Wexford. A statue commemorates the memory of his grandfather; his father was one of the first followers of Isaac Butt when the Home Rule movement was started, and was an eloquent and fiery speaker. For a while Mr. Redmond seemed destined to be a parliamentary official instead of a great parliamentary figure. He occupied for some years the position of a clerk in the Order Paper Office of the House of Commons, and was distinguished by courtesy of manner which made him popular with members of all parties.

But when Parnell started his new movement, the cry

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of the blood told, and the death of his father occurring about the same time turned Mr. Redmond's thoughts to a parliamentary career. A vacancy in the representation of the town of Wexford offered a favourable opportunity for the son to follow in the footsteps of the father.

But at that moment there had suddenly come into the political life of Ireland a man destined to play a remarkable part in all the developments of Irish political life for many years. Mr. T. M. Healy was a clerk in a London office when he attracted the notice of Parnell, then young and struggling against the powerful opposition of the elder men and the sedater movement of Isaac Butt. Mr. Healy, vehement in temperament and of strong opinions, and with a brilliant and caustic pen, was the correspondent of a nationalist paper in Dublin; and his letters did much to make Parnell and Parnell's movement known to the Irish public, and helped Parnell also against the great nationalist daily, the "Freeman's Journal," which, under the control of the late Edmund Dwyer Grey, had been one of Parnell's most vehement opponents.

Mr. Healy had become Parnell's secretary, then had been arrested and prosecuted for a speech of some violence, and in this way became a candidate for the first vacancy which might occur in the Parliamentary representation. So Mr. Redmond had to stand aside, but though he introduced Mr. Healy, then comparatively unknown, to the Wexford people, he announced that he did not abandon for ever his claims to the representation of the city so long associated with his family.

He had not long to wait, however, for a seat, and was

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elected for New Ross, another Wexford constituency, soon after. He entered Parliament in the agony of the fierce life-and-death struggle between the Gladstone ministry and the Land League outside, and the new and powerful Parnell party inside, the House of Commons. It was Mr. Redmond's singular fortune to be suspended within a few minutes of his taking his seat for the first time. The arrest of Michael Davitt on his ticket-of-leave by Sir William Harcourt was answered by a scene of violence in the House, and several members refused to obey the Speaker. They were suspended and excluded from the House by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the young member was of the number. Mr. Redmond did not immediately attract much attention in the House of Commons. He always spoke well, with a certain old-fashioned rotundity of phrasing, with great self-possession, and with perfect elocution, but without any striking originality. His distinguished appearance and manner, and the evidence already of a certain firmness and dignity of character, however, marked him out as one of the most promising of Parnell's young men. To him was entrusted accordingly, with his brother, Mr. William Redmond, an important mission to the Irish in Australia, with the object of gathering to the Parnell cause their important moral and financial support.

It was a mission which was confronted by great and even unexpected difficulties. The Irishmen of Australia form a type of the divided race more akin to the Irish in Canada than to the Irish at home, and entirely different in temper from the Irish who have settled in the

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United States. They combine loyalty to the Empire with intense devotion to Ireland—the mother country of their race. The violence of the agitation of the Land League was strongly condemned by many Australians, especially among the official classes, and the mission of the Redmond brothers accordingly found itself opposed by nearly all the official and all the newspaper circles of Australia. They were refused halls in several towns; ministers and ex-ministers, even of their own race, declined to come to their meetings, and they were freely denounced in the Australian parliaments. But the Irish masses rallied to them, and their mission brought in a large sum to the exchequer of the movement which Parnell had started in Ireland. Both brothers found charming wives among the well-to-do Irish families of Australia.

There is little to record in the few years that followed of special interest in Mr. Redmond's life. He continued to make careful, well-balanced, often eloquent speeches at Westminster. He was not one of the most prominent of the lieutenants of the great chief, but he was always on terms of strong personal friendship with Parnell. Coming from a neighbouring county to Wicklow, the county of Parnell, in some degree of the same class and with the same sporting tastes as his chief, Mr. Redmond was one of the few guests whom Parnell used to invite on his short, sporting visits to Aughavanagh, a disused and half-ruined police barrack which he rented as his shooting-box. These intimate relations were to play an important part in the lives and careers of the two men when the tragic moment came of the Parnell divorce suit,

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and the break-up into warring factions of Parnell's once solid phalanx of devoted followers.

The split made a greater change in the fortunes of Mr. Redmond than in those of any other member of the party, except, of course, those of Parnell. Mr. Redmond without hesitation adopted the position of his old chief and made some able speeches in his defence. But the majority of the party went against their leader, and Mr. Redmond found himself, with his leader, a member of a minority fighting a forlorn hope. In the midst of the tragic struggle, Parnell died; and there was no one of his followers who could compete with Mr. Redmond for the vacant place. Officially, the small party declared that Parnell's place could not be filled; but, except in name, Mr. Redmond was the leader of the new group.

For ten years he occupied that position. It was perhaps one of the most difficult and disheartening political positions ever held by a political leader. When the General Election of 1892, following on the death of Parnell, came, Mr. Redmond's whole party was reduced to nine, and over seventy of the anti-Parnellite section confronted him. The funds for carrying on the movement began gradually to grow less and less, and there was also ranged against them all the mighty force of the Roman Catholic Church. When the moment came to take up this trying position, Mr. Redmond had every reason to hesitate before accepting it. Admitted several years before to the Bar, with many of the gifts that make a great advocate, he had returned to the practice of his profession. Though a junior, he had in the first year earned what was regarded as a high income

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at the Irish Bar, and seemed assured of tranquillity and prosperity after all the turmoil and financial disaster that an Irish political career so often involves.

But the death of Parnell imposed upon him the duty of once more entering the political arena, and under very inauspicious conditions. He stood for the vacant seat in Cork city. He was defeated ; but, soon after, a vacancy in the representation of the city of Waterford, a Parnellite stronghold, enabled him once more to enter the House of Commons, and thus to take up the leadership of the small Parnellite group. The struggle on which he entered with this little band was arduous, in fact almost hopeless, and rendered more so by the torrent of bitter personal attack which characterises all civil war, and especially, perhaps in Ireland. His forces were never increased ; and his resources were as limited as his following. In the House of Commons he had to go into division after division, in which his tiny regiment always confronted the big battalions of his enemies ; and he found himself also in severe antagonism with the liberal party, against which all Parnellites felt bitterly, because they put down the fall of their late leader largely to Mr. Gladstone's famous letter after the divorce-court proceedings.

Mr. Redmond fought these tremendous odds with extraordinary courage and tenacity. He had to face internal divisions, a movement gradually lessening in its support and in its funds, and a great domestic sorrow which had come previous to the stormy days in the sudden death of his wife. He was in all personal affairs a man of great reserve ; what he suffered he never revealed, but his

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face told what his lips refused to utter. He grew haggard and pale; heavy lines wrinkled his face; at times he looked like a hunted man. And enemies who were not chivalrous assailed him with ferocity, while even close followers around him began to lose heart. And then suddenly the whole scene changed, and he was lifted in a moment from the abyss of a hopeless minority to the leadership of a strong and numerous party. The origin of this sudden transformation was to be found in the strong differences of opinion and the existence of incompatible personalities within the big anti-Parnellite majority. The leaders of the two sections were Mr. Dillon and Mr. Healy, and the divisions between them corresponded to some extent at least, with the divisions among the different sections of the Irish people themselves.

Mr. Justin McCarthy, old, tired, in feeble health, poor through the diversion of all his means and interest to politics instead of to his profession, had retained the leadership for several years against his will, and in obedience to an heroically keen sense of duty. But Mr. Dillon had at last been elected to take his place, and this brought the differences of the two sections to a head. Mr. Dillon's position in time became impossible, and he resigned the leadership; and then Mr. Healy, opening up negotiations with Mr. Redmond, and finding unexpected support in Mr. Edward Blake, a Canadian statesman, who had joined the Irish Parliamentary forces, was able to obtain the election of Mr. Redmond and to put an end to the split of ten years.

The leadership of Mr. Redmond did not start with any

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bright prospects. Mr. Dillon and his friends were still estranged from him by the memories of ten years of conflict, his alliance with Mr. Healy did not help with them, and Ireland was still torn by the divisions the split had produced. As time went on Mr. Redmond revealed powers of management, of tact, of judgment and of force of character with which he had not hitherto been credited. In addition he convinced his old opponents of an absence of all spirit of vindictiveness, and of a generosity, chivalry and straightness of personal character and political comradeship which won confidence. In a comparatively short time the old wounds healed, and Mr. Redmond became the fully accepted and admired leader of a united party, with some of his old opponents among his most loyal lieutenants. This was particularly so with Mr. Dillon, who, enjoying in Ireland more power over the popular imagination than Mr. Redmond himself or any other leader, threw all his influence to Mr. Redmond's side.

But in gaining Mr. Dillon Mr. Redmond lost Mr. Healy. For a time, Mr. Redmond, however, had the support of another powerful Irish politician in the person of Mr. William O'Brien, who at this period had risen to a position of commanding strength in Ireland by founding a new and powerful organisation known as the United Irish League. He acted in complete accord with Mr. Redmond, and lent to his leadership all the great popular forces under his command. But Mr. O'Brien's support involved a confirmation of the loss of Mr. Healy's. Thus, then, for a period there was a powerful triumvirate consisting of Mr. Redmond, Mr. Dillon and Mr. William O'Brien; they were

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able to defeat all opposition, and the leadership of Mr. Redmond seemed quite secure.

The Land Conference, which brought to an end the century-old land war in Ireland, by paving the way to Mr. Wyndham's famous Land Act, once more broke up this combination. Mr. Redmond and Mr. O'Brien fought hard for the Wyndham bill; Mr. Dillon was hostile to it as too generous in its terms to the landlords, and his views found support in the "Freeman's Journal," then under the control of Mr. Sexton, who had retired from parliament, unable to support its worries, though as managing director of the chief Nationalist daily paper in Dublin he still commanded a great deal of influence. For a time Mr. Redmond and Mr. O'Brien acted in concert, but ultimately Mr. O'Brien found himself unable to remain in the same party as Mr. Dillon; and when Mr. Redmond refused to proscribe Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Brien left him, and so another split followed. But Mr. Redmond, head of a party of more than seventy, against a group consisting of only nine, occupied a strong position, and held it practically without effective challenge for several years.

His attitude to English parties went through changes corresponding to those in his position towards the parties of Ireland. As Parnellite leader he had leaned rather to the conservatives; but as leader of the united party he was brought into close alliance with the liberals, especially when Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman took up the tradition of Gladstone in favour of Home Rule. Between him and the liberal leaders the relations became friendly and even confidential; but the ministry of which

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Campbell-Bannerman was the head consisted of many liberal leaguers—notably Mr. Asquith, Mr. Haldane and Sir Edward Grey—and that section had committed the liberal parliament, returned by the election of 1906, not to propose a measure of full Home Rule.

Mr. Redmond had to be content with a much smaller measure, known as the Irish Councils Bill. To it he gave a rather cold acceptance when it was first introduced; but popular opinion in Ireland rose against the measure, and at a national convention in Dublin Mr. Redmond had to take up a position of irreconcilable opposition, and the measure was dropped. For a while his position was shaken, but he recovered ground gradually again, and his election continued to be carried yearly without any opposition. However, the alliance of Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Healy, after a brief period of reconciliation and reunion, once more threatened his leadership and his whole movement. Constant attacks had diminished popular enthusiasm, and with that came a diminution of the large funds necessary for carrying on a party, most of whose members were poor; and more than once the whole movement stood face to face with both financial and political bankruptcy. It was saved by missions of leading supporters to the United States and to Australia.

Supported, however, by a big majority over the small O'Brien group, and by an overwhelming majority of the people outside Cork, Mr. Redmond held steadily on his way. But he had still to face fierce attacks from two such masters of vituperation as Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Healy. As has been said already, he inherited an estate from

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his uncle ; it had to be sold immediately, and the terms of purchase were made the starting-point for a new campaign. These attacks, Mr. Redmond, who had great self-restraint and much dignity, both of manner and of speech, bore for the most part in silence, and part of the hold he obtained over his countrymen was undoubtedly due to this persistent refusal to enter into the domain of sordid personalities.

He had to pass through another severe crisis when the struggle began between Mr. Asquith's ministry and the House of Lords. After the first election of 1910, when the fate of the Government lay in the hands of Mr. Redmond and his party, his position became very difficult. The budget, with which the controversy with the House of Lords was intertwined, had never been popular in Ireland. Against it was ranged the powerful liquor trade, both wholesale, because of the large additional tax on whisky, and retail, because of the higher license duties on the public-house ; and a strong agitation had accordingly arisen in the country, and threatened at once the budget, the ministry and Mr. Redmond.

Mr. Redmond extricated himself from this difficult position with great dexterity. He issued a challenge to the ministry to take definite, even defiant, action against the House of Lords, by demanding guarantees for the creation of peers in case their proposals to diminish the power of the House of Lords were again rejected by the Upper Chamber, and made his support of the budget dependent on their answer to that challenge. There were several weeks of hesitation in the ministry, owing

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to the divided counsels, and Mr. Redmond made a series of strong speeches, which now and then were known to excite strong resentment on the part of Mr. Asquith—notably that in which he declared that he would make the Prime Minister “toe the line.”

But one afternoon Mr. Lloyd George was able to announce to the Irish leaders that their views had been accepted; Mr. Redmond at once agreed to support the budget; the guarantees were demanded from the late King, and the ministerialists and the followers of Mr. Redmond were able to fight the second General Election of 1910 in cordial alliance, the O'Brien group angrily protesting.

It is not necessary to go into the long struggle which soon followed on the introduction of the Home Rule Bill. Mr. Redmond was not at any time anxious to speak more than was necessary, but he did intervene in these debates whenever the occasion demanded, and uttered a number of speeches remarkable for their self-restraint, their conciliatory temper and their dignity. He advanced his parliamentary reputation greatly, and was accepted as one of the most able orators that Ireland had ever sent to the imperial parliament. Finally, the bill, as everybody knows, was passed in the three sessions demanded by the new Parliament Act. But in the meantime the preparations for resistance in the North-East of Ulster had reached such threatening proportions that a last attempt was made to bring the two Irish parties to a compromise. On the initiative of the King, a conference was held at Buckingham Palace; it sat for several days, but no compromise could be effected, and the conference broke up.

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And then came the war and one of the greatest epochs of Mr. Redmond and of his movement. Rising immediately after Sir Edward Grey had made his momentous speech, which practically announced the determination of the British empire to enter into the struggle on the side of France and Russia, Mr. Redmond, in bold and eloquent language, announced that he and the Irish people, for whom he spoke, would give all their support to the empire in this struggle, and declared that now for the first time in the history of the two countries the British and the Irish people could stand side by side on the battlefield in full sympathy one with the other.

The speech created an immediate and profound impression, and from that moment the struggle for Home Rule assumed an entirely new and different form. The chief apprehension, which had hitherto stood in its way, that Ireland was irreconcilable and would take advantage of its new powers to embarrass the empire when its hour of peril came, was largely diminished, and many of the most vehement unionists entirely modified their point of view. There were tales even of scenes of an outburst of frank emotion which are unusual in the reserve of a British parliament, shaking of hands between old opponents and even tears of reconciliation in the common bond of patriotism. But there was still an ugly interval. The Home Rule Act had, by this time, passed through the different stages which stood between it and its final passage into law by receiving the royal signature. Six weeks passed of negotiation and of struggle sometimes hot and fierce; but at last the royal signature was given. But

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there were two important qualifications : first, the pledge was still given that an amending bill for dealing with the case of North-East Ulster should be introduced at the right time ; and secondly, it was stipulated that the operation of the Home Rule Act should be suspended while the war was in progress.

Mr. Redmond threw himself at once and with great energy and enthusiasm into the work of recruiting in Ireland for the British army, and with conspicuous success ; and the sight, new in British politics, was seen of the Irish leader taking his stand at military reviews by the side of the king and queen. On every suitable occasion he backed up the policy of the war in the House of Commons, and he toured Ireland with the lord lieutenant for recruiting meetings. When the liberal ministry found itself compelled to assent to a coalition, nobody was surprised to hear that Mr. Asquith had offered a seat in the cabinet to Mr. Redmond. But Mr. Redmond felt it wiser and better for the cause of the allies that he should remain in independent, though friendly, isolation from the cabinet. This had some unhappy consequences. For Sir Edward Carson, the leader of the other great Irish party, had been induced to join the cabinet, and this was one of the many incidents which led to the next and most sensational episode in the career of Mr. Redmond and the history of Ireland.

For some years there had been growing up in various sections of Irish life a curious movement, which broke away from the old moorings and the old leaders. It had taken shape in an impassioned crusade to restore the

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ancient Irish tongue ; it found a more innocent outlet in a new Irish Theatre and in a new form of Irish drama. Sometimes it disguised itself in athletic associations or literary leagues ; and the small group of irreconcilable revolutionaries known as the Clan-na-Gael, on the other side of the Atlantic, watchful and persistent, had seen its opportunity for exploiting all these forces.

Mr. Redmond took little notice of these manifestations and generously confessed that he had been mistaken in doing so when the explosion came. That explosion, as is known, burst upon nearly everybody with the surprising suddenness of an earthquake. Almost simultaneously it was announced that Sir Roger Casement and a German vessel had attempted to effect a landing and to create a rising in the South of Ireland, while a body of armed men, proclaiming Ireland a Republic, seized the Post Office and other buildings in Dublin, and Ireland was in open, though partial, revolt against the government.

The outbreak was put down ; Casement was captured ; the German vessel and its cargo of rifles were sent to the bottom of the sea. Stern military measures, including several executions, were taken, and then came one of the most perilous moments in the career of Mr. Redmond. National feeling, which had been violently and by an overwhelming majority on the side of the law, veered considerably round, and Sinn Feinism, as the new movement was called, began to take some hold on the quick sympathies of the Irish people. An atmosphere was thus created which proved extremely unfavourable to Mr. Redmond's policy, and became even perilous to his life.

*not clear 75
important points omitted*

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The resentment of the republicans and then of their sympathisers was concentrated on him as the embodiment of the sentiment of loyalty to the empire, and sinister rumours became prevalent as to the designs which were being hatched against him.

This state of feeling intervened just at the moment when, by a common impulse, nearly all sections of political thought, British and Irish, felt drawn to a common effort to make an end of the misunderstanding between the two peoples. Mr. Asquith went to Ireland to see for himself; he returned with the conviction that government by Dublin Castle had become impossible, and that the bold experiment should be made of substituting for it government by an Irish National Executive and by the immediate operation of Home Rule. Mr. Lloyd George was chosen by the cabinet to carry on negotiations between the different representatives of Irish opinion, and he suggested a scheme which on the one hand gave immediate Home Rule to the South of Ireland, but excluded from its operation six of the Ulster counties.

Encouraged by the strong tide of feeling which was running against Mr. Redmond and his associates, the supporters of Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Healy declared war against this compromise; a vigorous campaign was organised, especially in a powerful daily paper, against the scheme; and at last the struggle reached its climax in a convention of the nationalists of the excluded counties in Belfast. Thither Mr. Redmond went, accompanied by Mr. Dillon, who had great ascendancy over popular opinion, and also by the most powerful, boldest and most eloquent

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representative of Ulster national opinion, Mr. Devlin.

As every one knows, Mr. Lloyd George's attempt to produce an agreed settlement broke down at the last moment—partly through unionist opposition, partly through the intervention of powerful members of the Roman hierarchy in Ireland—and the situation steadily grew worse. The Sinn Fein republican movement developed in violence and strength, and swept into its ranks all the more turbulent elements of the South and West of Ireland. If a vacancy took place in an Irish constituency the Sinn Fein candidate defeated the official nationalist by ever-increasing majorities, and the bitterest blow of all was administered when East Clare, which for a long succession of years had been the seat of the Irish leader's gallant brother, Major Willie Redmond, renounced his memory and the cause for which he died so nobly by returning the rebel republican leader, De Valera himself.

When Mr. Asquith was succeeded in the premiership by Mr. Lloyd George, towards the close of 1916, Mr. Redmond lost no time in pressing the new government to make a clear pronouncement as to their Irish policy. He urged them boldly to put the Home Rule Act into operation, and by standing at the side of the Irish constitutional nationalists to take all the wind out of the sails of the revolutionaries.

The new government offered the two Irish political parties a choice of two alternatives—(1) the immediate establishment of a Home Rule parliament in Ireland, with the exclusion of the six Ulster counties, and (2) the appointment of a Home Rule convention, at which Irishmen of

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all parties, creeds, classes and shades of opinion should themselves endeavour to work out a practical and agreed scheme of Home Rule. The Ulster unionists preferred the first alternative, but as the nationalists rejected it decisively, both parties agreed to the convention.

Mr. Redmond did everything in his power to promote its successful inauguration. He agreed most cordially to the suggestion that the minority parties in Ireland should be given a generous representation out of all proportion to their numerical strength; he offered to stand down personally and take no part if by so doing he could promote good feeling or give proof of his ardent desire for reconciliation. The Ulster unionist leaders made public acknowledgment of the helpful and conciliatory part which Mr. Redmond had played during the sittings of the convention, and described with emotion the eagerness with which he had striven for a peaceful settlement. While making his last speeches at the convention for the cause so dear to his heart, it was known that he was enduring physical torture. It is only too certain, therefore, that the pain of mortal illness, then attacking him, must have been poignantly intensified by the mental anxieties engendered by the fear lest the convention should end in the failure and breakdown which have attended all other attempts to solve the Irish problem by consent. His illness increased and on March 6th, 1918, he died.

I have already sufficiently described the personal appearance of Mr. Redmond. He was somewhat short of stature, just about middle height, and in the latter years of his life was stout in figure, though severe dieting corrected

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this fault. He was very methodical in his habits. He took the trouble of writing down a memorandum of every important conversation in which he was engaged ; he kept his papers in perfect order ; he was never known to miss a train or an appointment ; and his work for Ireland carried him over most parts of the empire and through innumerable journeys. He was quite simple in his tastes. He lived in a small flat, without even a lift, in a distant part of Kensington, and he let this flat whenever his duties permitted him to live in Ireland.

In Ireland he had acquired for a small sum the old shooting-lodge in which he and Parnell had shot together in the days of their youth. It was situated in Aughavanagh, a remote spot in the hills of Wicklow. Its appearance was essentially Irish, for it combined both modest comfort and the gaping remains of better days. The two ends of the house consisted of roofless wings, the middle alone was inhabited or roofed. Here Mr. Redmond, remote from everybody, seven miles from the nearest post-office, and unconnected with the world by either telegraph or telephone, used to spend in much-enjoyed quietude some months of every year when parliamentary conditions permitted, and here he used modestly to entertain his friends, who had to reach him over the mountains by motor. He was somewhat indolent physically, he loved the gun, loved a cigar, and could pass through an almost solitary vacation without any desire for the tumult and the restlessness of political agitation. He had found in a second marriage great domestic happiness. His wife, an Englishwoman and a protestant, by tact, by reticence,

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by keen common sense and by her absolute devotion to him, became the best and wisest helpmeet. She accompanied him wherever he went, and watched over his health and happiness.

His oratory was chaste, careful and studied. He nearly always committed a speech of any importance to writing; he rarely made a mistake of tactics; often he rose to eloquence; but as a rule his speeches were colder than the typical oratory of his countrymen. He was accordingly much more effective in the House of Commons than on the platform. But if he rarely excited enthusiasm among his own people, his associates, on the other hand, felt for him warm friendship, and some old colleagues, who had passed through the stormy and precarious times of the small Parnellite group, passionate devotion.

He was quite free from pretence or self-conceit; indeed, he was modest and almost self-depreciatory. His defects as a political leader and speaker were partly due to a somewhat rigid mind and a certain obstinacy of view. He lacked adroitness and suppleness either of mind or of speech; he had not the passionate temper that responds quickly to a nation so quick-tempered and so incalculable as the Irish people. Above all, he justified his leadership by retaining it for many years, by uniting a party that had been bitterly divided, and by winning the friendship of even the strongest political opponents.

T. P. O'CONNOR.



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MAJOR WILLIE REDMOND

MAJOR WILLIE REDMOND, brother of John Redmond who succeeded Parnell as chairman of the nationalist parliamentary party, was born at Wexford in 1861. The Redmonds were one of the few families among the Irish landed gentry who had remained true to catholicism. Penal laws, imprisonments and social degradation had almost completely succeeded in making catholicism and poverty synonymous in Ireland.

Willie Redmond's education resembled that of all the sons of tolerably well-to-do Irish catholics. Patriotism decided his career. He had been nurtured in the ancient faith and nationalism and, though coming from the propertied class himself, the well-being of the poor farmers and labourers who were his compatriots was more to him than any rewards which an alien government in control of his native country could bestow upon him.

He became a champion of the oppressed.

He entered public life as representative of East Clare in 1892, and quickly became a marked figure at Westminster. Irish self-government was his political faith. He was fearless in its advocacy. His later career proved that he, like all true Irishmen, was really ready to die for the national ideal.

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He was more of an attractive than an impressive personality. He was of medium height, genial, witty, rather good-looking, and always well-dressed. His complexion was fair. The shining smoothness of a happy disposition remained in his cheeks to the end of his days.

In those troubled times, police and military were busy in Ireland. The police were almost as busy in parliament, dragging Irish members from their places in the House for refusing to obey rules which had been specially framed to prevent the wrongs of Ireland from being made known to the world by her representatives. Willie Redmond was perpetually in conflict with the authorities in and out of parliament. Yet he remained a favourite there. His affable earnestness took all sting out of his rebelliousness. Even when the struggle between the government and the Irish members was at its highest point, his gaiety, his wit and his audacious sallies kept the House in roars of laughter, and political opponents could feel no bitterness against him.

When his leader, Parnell, came into difficulties with his own country, Willie Redmond was one of the staunchest men who rallied to his side, and fought his hardest for Parnell's re-establishment.

Later the prospect of Home Rule coming from the government influenced Willie Redmond, as it did most of his countrymen, and he became a less turbulent patriot. But it was only outwardly that he had changed.

Inwardly he was unchanged, as was shown by an incident during the final stages of the 1912-1914 Home Rule Bill which the Asquith ministry had apparently determined to

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pass. Some unionists of the North were, at the time, threatening to place Ireland under the rule of the German emperor, by means of the Orange volunteers which had been raised in Ulster, and carry fire and slaughter into the homes of nationalists, rather than let the Irish win freedom. When the crisis was at its highest it was my fortune to be with Willie Redmond at the House of Commons. He spoke of the Irish national volunteers which were being organised to deal with the outrageous threats of the Orangemen. He had joined the national volunteers and anticipated a serious conflict in the last phase of Ireland's assertion of her right to be free. He said very earnestly :

"I suppose some of us will get killed. But," he immediately added, with a most pleasant smile, "that won't matter."

Courage and chivalry were the dominant qualities in his character. Under all his careless wit and geniality was a great soul. That was seen when the Foreign Minister announced in the House of Commons on August 4th, 1914, that Britain could not stand by and see the French Channel ports attacked by German warships. Willie Redmond sprang to his feet in the House, and shouted triumphantly : "Hurrah for France !" The French and the Irish had been comrades-in-arms on many a battlefield. Then, when war was declared between Britain and Germany, he, who had always been ready to fight against British government in Ireland, volunteered to fight against Germany in defence of the British empire.

The opponents of Home Rule were not so ready to put aside their antagonism. It was only after most misc-

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able and contemptible haggling that the Bill was allowed to be carried with a proviso that it should not be put into operation until six months after the war was over.

It must be confessed that few nationalists were completely satisfied with that arrangement. At the same time, the generous Irish temperament tried to make the best of a bad bargain. The world was at war. It was no time for imitating the wretched haggling of the opponents of Home Rule. Willie Redmond threw himself heart and soul into the work of influencing his countrymen to form an Irish army to fight the common enemy.

Undreamed-of difficulties were placed in the way of that great purpose by the men in power. They wanted Irishmen to join the army as ordinary soldiers in British regiments. Even in Great Britain, cases were known where young men who wished to enlist in Irish regiments were forced to apply seven times at different recruiting offices before they could be enrolled. The authorities would have been sensible if they had devised some means of appealing to the chivalrous spirit of the Irish people and their devotion to liberty. Instead, no chance was lost of damping enthusiasm or wounding Irish pride and all its most sacred susceptibilities.

In spite of these appalling blunders, Willie Redmond and his colleagues succeeded in recruiting one hundred thousand national volunteers ; and he himself, as an officer of the Royal Irish, went to France with the Sixteenth Irish Division, to fight for the British people.

Well-intentioned but ill-informed publicists said that his attitude, at such a critical moment in the destinies

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of his own country and of Great Britain, exemplified the eternal paradox of the Irish nature.

Only those who are blind see any paradox there.

Willie Redmond had the normal vision of his countrymen, who see a vast difference between Dublin Castle and the British people. His hope in volunteering for active service was to bring about, by his example, a feeling of mutual trust in place of the old, false distrust between nationalists and unionists both inside and outside Ireland. That purpose is stated in his own handwriting, in a document which exists as a permanent record of his secret thoughts :

“ I should like all my friends to know,” runs his message, “ that in going to France I was doing my best for Ireland.”

He was a simple, sincere man. He was prepared to give his life for the ideal of patriotism. How many of those who derided his ideal were as ready to equal him in his self-sacrifice ? He believed that his action would influence the government to keep their promise to set Ireland free.

He was in the thick of the fighting of 1916, and came through it unscathed.

During rare intervals in the mighty conflict he came home on leave. In March, 1917, just one year after the Sinn Fein outbreak in Ireland, he visited the House of Commons, and made an eloquent appeal for reconciliation between Great Britain and his native land. He had been face to face with the real perils and horrors of war, and was again returning to the firing line. He besought all parties to come to a peaceful settlement of what, in comparison with what was going on in France, was a simple problem.

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Many who heard him noted a grave change in his tone and were profoundly touched. Even his natural cheerfulness could not hide from them a solemn sound of farwell in his voice. A friend congratulated him on his speech, and expressed the hope that he would live to see the realisation of his ideal of an Ireland free.

"I pray God that I may see it, my boy," was the answer. "But one never knows what may happen out yonder."

He had attained the rank of Major of the Royal Irish, with a staff appointment in the Sixteenth Irish Division. His position, in the ordinary way, would have kept him at Headquarters behind the firing line. But in the terrible battle of Messines, on June 7th, 1917, he insisted, against the wishes of his superiors, upon going into action with his regiment.

"Where the boys go—I go," he said.

That day he led his men in the attack on Wytschaete Wood. Early in the advance, he fell, mortally wounded by a German shell.

He had written to his wife before going into battle that morning—his last message: "Do not fret. Just pray. And, if I do not come back, you will know that I have done my best for Ireland and every one."

He never recovered consciousness. He was picked up by an Ulster division ambulance—picked up, unknown to him, by his supposed native enemies who had become his best friends on the battlefield—and taken to an Ulster field hospital.

He died within a few hours.

His body was taken to the little Belgian village of Loecre,

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some miles behind the fighting line, and buried in a grave prepared for him by pious nuns in their convent garden, near a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, in the grotto devoted to her honour there.

A sealed message which he left behind him in Ireland said : " If I should die, I will give my wife my last thought and love, and ask her to pray that we may meet hereafter. I shall die a true Irish catholic, humbly hoping for mercy from God through the intercession of His Blessed Mother. I should like all my friends to know that in joining the Irish Brigade and going to France, I sincerely believed, as all Irish soldiers do, that I was doing my best for the welfare of Ireland in every way."

General Sir William Robertson, Chief of Staff, wrote of Willie Redmond : " He went over the top with the men and fell : a truly gallant soldier. He has not died in vain, let us hope, for the sake of the cause he had at heart. I doubt if he would have wished to die otherwise than fighting with the two fine Irish divisions which set such a fine example. If only people at home were animated by the same spirit which prevails between these divisions the Irish question would cease to exist."

His burial service, that sad morning, was read by two representatives of opposite creeds, catholic and protestant, the chaplains of the Ulster division and the Irish division, Orange and Green, the colours of unnatural contention artificially and wickedly stirred up by evil men for ignoble purposes. He had given his life for the noble purpose of blending those colours in mutual forgiveness and love.

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His human sacrifice had divinity of spirit. By his blood his brothers might be saved.

He was over fifty when he had volunteered, and could have stayed behind the battle line in that last battle. But he preferred to go into danger with his men.

Children of the village put flowers on his grave, and troops of his own and the Ulster division fired a farewell salute above the melancholy mound of fresh clay that hid him for ever from mortal eyes. A coffin, a rare luxury of the dead out there, had been found for him.

No soldier's death in all the war, where millions of men died, caused such widespread sorrow as Willie Redmond's. His remarkable character had made him known and admired, almost as a beloved personal friend, in France, Belgium, Great Britain, Ireland, America, all the colonies, in India, Egypt, and throughout Europe generally. Even while the guns were firing with dull distant thuds across the Ypres line, pilgrimages of his countrymen, catholic and protestant, came to that convent garden of Belgium to place wreaths of honour upon the grave of the man they loved. They brought also a bunch of heather plucked by his wife from his Wexford garden, and bunches of shamrock from Vinegar Hill to take root in the foreign clay above him. Then officers, soldiers and pilgrims and nuns went away, leaving only the sound of the guns that had laid him there to speak to him.

The tide of battle came back again, rolling over him and everywhere around him, but did not touch him. The grave was wonderfully preserved. One shell dropped between it and the grotto near it, leaving a huge hole in

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the earth. Another shell tore up the soil at the foot of the grave. Broken rifles, bayonets, helmets and smashed field-glasses, mutilated bodies everywhere, and a dead German officer, with his head lying against the little cross upon the grave, told of terrible things that had happened in the convent garden which, with the convent itself, changed hands six times in one night during the last fury of the war, when nothing was left of the village itself but tortured clay and ruins of roofs and walls riddled with bullet and shell holes. Yet amidst all the desolation Willie Redmond's grave remained miraculously unharmed.

Is there any human tragedy so overwhelming in its appeal to our finest and most sensitive feelings, so likely to bring tears to our eyes by its delicate torture and melting sadness, as the story of an honest man who gives his life for a beautiful ideal, while those who admired him live to see both his ideal and his noble death ignored? Is that to be the end of Willie Redmond's story? Who are the mischief-makers? There is certainly not enmity but rooted friendship between Ireland and the British Colonies, and there never was and never will be any real enmity between the people of Ireland and Great Britain. There is ordinary racial antagonism, which is, in essence, merely national pride, and applies to all peoples. The English think themselves the finest race on earth. But what a poor pride that is compared with the glorious and almost divine pride of the Scots. Even Welsh pride pales beside that of the Scots, and Irish pride becomes humility. All the misunderstanding between the peoples of Great Britain and Ireland is due to the foolish and wrong things said

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and done by extremists whose actions and utterances ought not to have the slightest influence on the impartial course of justice. Willie Redmond trusted his countrymen. Will they not trust each other? There was a moment in his country's history when all her sadness seemed over. He risked and gave all to perpetuate that promise of happiness. When he offered his life in defence of the British people in the memorable year of 1914, Ireland was tranquil. Her hope and trust in the new government had brought a marvellous change in the relationship between her people and their rulers. Peace and goodwill permeated the land. Crime of any kind was almost unknown. At assize court after assize court the only thing a visiting judge had to do was to accept white gloves. Outside Ireland, the whole British empire had been won over to Irish self-government. A hole had been bored through the House of Lords, in order to let the bill go unharmed, all the way to Ireland. Only a nod was wanted, and the Irish parliament would rise again from the dust of its tragic ruins on College Green. That nod can come at any moment from the children of Ireland, if only they will unite in the blessed ideal of brotherly reconciliation that inspired the soul of Willie Redmond,

JOSEPH KEATING.

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"The Spirit of the Irish is Unconquerable!"
— HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

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CHAPTER I

WHY THE IRISH CAME TO TYNESIDE

WHEN the Irish originally visited Tyneside they brought religion and civilisation to the natives who, after the Roman exodus from England, had been left as a prey for plundering invaders. An Irish saint, Aidan, in 635 built the first church and school at Lindisfarne, and from there spread the gospel and alphabet over all Northumbria's ancient kingdom.

In this sense Erin's children were always great invaders. There is scarcely a country in the world lacking a cathedral or college to commemorate an Irish invasion that gave unselfish hearts and pure souls to the service of nations, and took away nothing but the highest riches of all—spiritual blessings and gratitude. The Irish invaded the mind—not the purse. Time-worn relics of old St. Peter's at Wearmouth and St. Paul's at Jarrow, the holy island of Lindisfarne on the Northumberland coast, and ruined monasteries along its river banks, remain to tell us why the Irish first settled on the Tyne.

That amazing first epoch was followed by one of an equally astonishing nature, if the truth is deeply examined,

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in 1914. An individual may, by a stroke of genius, embody the thought of an entire community in one definite action at a critical moment. The extraordinary part played by Irish Tyneside in the war completely expressed Irish feelings in Great Britain and the colonies. And—though in a humble sense—as St. Patrick held up the shamrock to illustrate the Trinity in One, by pointing to its three beautiful leaves growing from the same stem, that surprising, inspired touch given by Tynesiders to their record singles it out as crystallising the glory, tragedy and idealism in the Irish story all over the world.

White-haired Irishmen in Newcastle will observe with a good-humoured smile, yet with a gentle note of sadness :

“We settled down here on the Tyneside before the rush. I wasn’t here myself, of course, for I was young and small in Ireland, but some of us, indeed, were here before the rush.”

By “the rush”—which had fastened on their imagination as a distinct date, like the difference between B.C. and A.D.—they meant the period from 1845 to 1847, when Ireland lost over two millions of her sons and daughters by hunger, disease and emigration. All who could fled from death.

The rush took them wherever there was—in Lady Dufferin’s meaning phrase of “The Irish Emigrant”—bread and work. Hundreds of men, women and children sought refuge on the banks of the Tyne, and saw bright hopes flowing in that fair, broad river.

The Tyne awakens love and admiration. Look down from the High Level Bridge with old Castle Garth on

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the Newcastle side, and the weather-worn slope to the Swing Bridge on Gateshead bank. Follow the river. Romance clings to the great, steel-clad ships gliding slowly up and down upon silent, tidal waves shining and rippling in the sunlight. Far down, a grey mountain rising from the centre of the water proves to be a wounded battleship, with myriads of workmen about it, hammering, night and day, to cure the wound. The deck-guns, one above the other, seem to be set in rock, as if the vessel were a movable Gibraltar. Their pointing, gaping mouths speak of death. Going slowly round and round the fighting giant is a tiny, guardian submarine, like a watchful snail with its house on its back, scarcely visible above the water line. Terrible-looking, criss-cross, metal girders, towering to the sky, are mighty cranes, apparently strong enough to lift ships out of the river, or swing the earth. Scrap-heaps of old iron are flung into furnaces, and from the flames arise the largest ocean liners the world has ever seen. Tyneside shipyards, docks, ironworks, chemical works, factories, quays and jetties, gave food and life to many a broken-hearted Irish refugee, and helped him to the means of securing what had been taken from him in his own country: a roof to shelter his children.

Exposed to sunshine and gales, rain, sleet and snow, the Irish came over on the open decks of cargo and cattle boats, landed at various parts of the coast, and haggard with hunger and weariness, often perished as well as famished, tramped away in search of employment towards Newcastle.

Some of the men wore white flannel wraps, like jackets,

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with no buttons, but rolled up at the bottoms to keep the garments in position. The women, in most cases, were dark-haired, blue-eyed, and gentle-natured. Their matronly forms still retained much of the beauty of their colleen days. Many of the mothers wore short red petticoats, nursed suckling infants, and carried small bundles of baby-clothes. The women's heads were covered by long shawls which gave their half-hidden faces an expression of madonna-like modesty.

Numbers of the emigrants had been evicted and had left their farms burning behind them, and all they had possessed in flames, excepting only strings of boys and girls who clung to their fathers for protection in this strange land. But for these family treasures the men's hands were empty, their hearts full of red passions born of the flames that had destroyed their homes.

Some of the strangers wandered into the Northumberland and Durham coalfields, as labourers and rubbish-tippers about the mines there. The majority settled down along the river. The Irish were welcomed because it was soon discovered that they had strength enough, in Tyneside language, to tear a ship from the blocks. They became jetty-men, blast-furnace men, shipbuilding and engine-yard workers. They lifted countless tons of iron ore from the deep holds of vessels. They toiled in metal and brass foundries and roughing and finishing mills, loading bars on trucks, doing odds and ends of manual tasks, and poisoning their lungs in chemical factories; whilst at blast furnaces, also, their duties were not only hard, but hot and dangerous, exposing them to the seorch

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and glare of splashing, molten metal. Wherever there was a call for pick, shovel, sledge-hammer, or mere physical energy, the new-come-overs were engaged.

They came from counties Down, Derry, Galway, Leitrim, from Omagh and the North and West generally. They took whatever job they could get, no matter how hard or long they would have to work to earn food and shelter—"bread an' bread," as they phrased it with a genuinely Irish humorous gibe at their own sorrows. They rented a room or two under a friendly thatch till better accommodation could be found, were grateful for being allowed to live, and with native piety thanked God on their knees night and morning for this blessing.

At the same time they made great efforts to build schools and churches for the teaching and practice of their faith.

They dwelt on both sides of the Tyne at Newcastle, Gateshead, Wallsend, Jarrow and Consett. The little Irish colonies resembled clusters of wild flowers, the seeds of which had been blown to the river banks by strange winds and had taken kindly to the soil, chiefly in Sandgate and about Castle Steps in Newcastle, and in Pipewellgate Bank on the Gateshead side. Narrow, small buildings, some now deserted ruins, in the crooked streets of Pipewellgate's battered slope bear even to-day names of Irish people in whom, possibly, an ambition to improve their worldly status had urged them to make an effort to enter commerce in the forlorn direction of huckster and rag-and-bone shops.

Fortunate young men, whose parents had saved a little,

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travelled the district with packs on their backs, trading suits of clothes, dress-pieces, or badly needed domestic articles at the pleasant rate of one shilling a week. Other sons of farmers or tradespeople gradually built up businesses in Newcastle, or succeeded in the professions.

Such lucky ones were not numerous. Centuries of bitter and even vile oppression had almost murdered the desire for social development in the many.

As soon as a boy reached an age at which he could earn a few shillings, the needs of the large family to which he usually belonged made it necessary for him to begin pulling up furnace doors in steel works, or to start rivet-catching or rivet-heating in shipyards. For lack of the means of entering the well-paid crafts, he grew up an unskilled labourer as his father was before him, and their generations would be after him.

Their homes were sparsely furnished, and when every house belongs to everybody else in the street, the bare feet of children running in and out from muddy or dusty roads make keeping the floors clean a troublesome thing. Domestic decorations were largely absent. The interiors might show patches of dark plaster under tattered paper, but they held coloured pictures of sacred subjects and political heroes. Crude and tawdry the pictures might have been, yet they symbolised two things for which their owners had suffered deeply rather than abandon them: their dearest, imperishable ideals—faith and nationality.

Outwardly, constitutional agitation and quite respectable societies were carried on, and as far back as 1848 the “No. 1 Newcastle-upon-Tyne Felon Repeal Club”

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had been formed by Mr. Bernard M'Anulty, whose business capacity had made him a wealthy man. When he died, Monsignor M'Cartan came all the way from the North of Ireland to preach M'Anulty's funeral oration. The coffin had been brought to the church. "There y'are, Barney—Barney with the big heart," said the Monsignor, looking down from the pulpit at the coffin, "and I hope your soul is shining in the glory of Heaven to-day."

Deeper currents ran under the humble surface. Irishmen, whose mission was the defence of religion and country, had their groups well established. Later came Fenianism with its promise of a world-wide army to win legislative independence for Ireland. Tyneside was honeycombed with Fenians. After a day's exhausting labour in steel-works and shipyards, men spent half the night in dark cellars, planning, organising and getting the "stuff"—which meant rifles, revolvers, and ammunition—aboard harmless-looking boats waiting at quays.

But the Van was smashed in Manchester, Michael Davitt was in prison, and all attempts at successful rebellion ended in disaster.

In spite of sorrow and misfortune, Irish Tynesiders had the secret of happiness—a secret possessed by all whose view of life comes from instinctive charity, purity and high intelligence. On winter evenings in a neighbour's kitchen, round a fine fire—for though there was no turf in Newcastle there were lashings of coal—the colonists sang "M'Kenna's Dream," "The Kerry Eagle," "Napoleon's Farewell," "The Tanyard Side," and other come-all-ye's and immortal ballads of undying love,

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beginning "As I roved out." Young men and women danced jigs, reels and hornpipes on cracked stone flags to the "berr'l" of a tin whistle or the rasping of a fiddle in the corner, and old people talked of Erin's glories, and told wonderful tales of enchanted things, or said "Whisper!" as a prelude to giving the latest news of relatives or friends in the old country. Sickness or hardship in any house brought generous help from all the others, and every poor corpse was given the friendliest of wakes, at which more fairy stories were told, and innocent games like "Cock in the corner," made harmless fun, and prayers were said silently amidst cheerful laughter, much sneezing from snuff-taking, and thick clouds of tobacco smoke from long clay pipes.

At first, the notion of being buried in England made many a death-bed uneasy. It was long before the practice lost its hint of sacrilege in the minds of survivors. It was longer still before they lost a heartbreaking feeling of home-sickness. And crumbling tombstones along Tyne-side mark little spaces of consecrated clay beneath which rest many poor exiles who, in thought, had always been going back to end their days in Ireland.

CHAPTER II

HUMAN DESTINY DEMANDS FREEDOM—TYNESIDE FENIANS

A MAN born free may die a slave. But the fate of an individual cannot overtake a nation, because nations cannot die; and the mailed fist, no matter how tightly closed upon the form of liberty, has never been able to keep the wings of its soul from expanding. Bad rulers may compel a people, once free, to pass through every degrading and humiliating phase of existence—even centuries of wrong may be done—yet a people who have inherited freedom will finally regain their birthright. Human destiny is so planned that tyrants shall die, their slaves shall live, and freedom shall sit on tyranny's throne.

Though Irish Tynesiders saw in 1867 the last failure of armed force as a means of winning national salvation, saw the hanging of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien in Manchester, saw Michael Davitt and nearly all their leaders in chains, and the movement shattered, they had not lost faith in their ideal; and many a hunted Fenian, escaping from English police, found welcome and safe hiding in the home of a poor Tyneside worker, or in the fine house of a well-to-do compatriot, whose worldly success, wealth and high social standing put him above all suspicion of Fenian sympathies.

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While some of the Fénians were trying to reunite their forces in Ireland, Great Britain and America, and organise yet another armed rebellion, the teachings of Daniel O'Connell and Thomas Davis were slowly coming to the surface again.

The killing of D'Esterre by O'Connell in a duel had left him with such a horror of manslaying that he had ever afterwards worn a black glove on the hand which had fired the fatal shot ; and he had declared at a moment when four million people were around him, clamouring for the word to toss Dublin Castle and the British rulers into the Irish Sea, that even liberty itself was not worth the shedding of one drop of human blood. He had advised constitutional action. Thomas Davis, with the genius of statesmanship, had boldly formulated the three principles which have since been the actual foundation of the national movement. Davis taught his countrymen to trust only themselves, and put no faith in whigs and tories. He showed that there were only two parties in Ireland : those who profited, and those who suffered, by her degradation. And, greatest vision of all, he saw that the English people, as distinct from governments, had never been the enemies of the Irish, and advised his countrymen to make a friend of British democracy. "It is a rising power," he said, "with no interests hostile to Ireland."

Hunger and suffering had blinded Ireland for a time, but she had recovered a little, and was beginning to see the meaning and value of what her two wisest leaders had taught her. To put the lessons of O'Connell and Davis into practice, a Home Rule Association was formed in

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Dublin with Isaac Butt at the head, and Irish Tynesiders, always ready to support with gun, purse, or vote, whatever policy seemed best in the general opinion of Ireland, sought, in their own sphere, political power, which was to be their new weapon in the fight for a national parliament. Political power wisely used would, it was clearly seen, unite the Irish and British democracies in the battle against all unjust social and labour conditions; and with the two peoples united, Dublin Castle rule would get short shrift.

The first blow struck for this policy on Tyneside was delivered effectively by an Irishman who had settled in Newcastle, Mr. John Barry, during the elections under Forster's Education Act of 1870.

John Barry, who afterwards represented County Wexford in parliament, organised the Irish vote in Newcastle, defeated one of the tory candidates at the first election, and at the next election put in a nationalist, Mr. Edward Savage, at the top of the poll. Irish voting power in Newcastle began to be respected.

Barry had the confidence of Tyneside Fenians, and by calling them to his side on this apparently trivial fight, his intention was to win them over to political action. He had a larger object in view. He travelled England, Scotland and Wales, using his influence with the "advanced" party, as the physical force men were termed, and inducing them to form branches for the constitutional advocacy of Home Rule. His aim was to unite all parties in the new movement. His success was so remarkable that he boldly initiated and organised a

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convention of all Irish societies in England and Scotland to be held at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, under Isaac Butt's presidency, on January 8th, 1873. The date is important, because that convention was the foundation of the Home Rule Movement in Great Britain, with Isaac Butt as President, and John Barry as Secretary, and the resolution passed that day as its principle: "That, as representatives of the Home Rule Associations of England and Scotland, we are of opinion that a thorough, practical union of all the associations is essentially necessary for the furtherance of the objects in view." The title fixed for the new league was The Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain.

The difficulties of forming a united body at the time had been nothing less than stupendous. Scattered about the country were fragmentary societies, each following a policy differing from all the others, and controlled by strong-minded men who could not be easily led in any direction but that chosen by themselves. Many still believed resolutely in armed force. To persuade and lead such a conflicting mass of elements along one path called for the subtle intuitive power known as organising genius. That Manchester convention which gave birth to the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain, parent of the National League and United Irish League in this country, was the creation of the Tyneside settler from Bannow, County Wexford, who had lived in Northumberland since childhood. John Barry had certainly had advantages of education and social position. His family had been more fortunate, in a worldly sense, than most of their friends. As a youth

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he had been apprenticed to trade in Newcastle, and by sheer ability not only succeeded in becoming member of parliament for his native county in 1880, but later in rising to be the head of a great business house, Barry, Ostlere and Shepherd, one of the largest manufacturers of linoleum and floorcloth in the world. He resides at Kirkcaldy, and is a justice of the peace for Fife. A look at John Barry's features reveals the qualities of daring and initiative. He typifies the Irishman who is able to lead in the affairs of the world; and, while winning personal distinction and fortune, is still devoted to the ideal of winning nationhood for his country.

The Irish of Northumberland and Durham increased rapidly year by year in numbers and local influence. Some of the settlers had become foremen of works where they had begun as merely unskilled hands. In the mines, sons of labourers had become hewers and putters earning good wages. In Newcastle particularly the new generation of the farming class filled important positions, owned large businesses, and were a power in all municipal affairs as well as in commerce and the professions. The sword of political action in Ireland's cause was kept well sharpened and always ready for use.

Desire of betterment seemed to have moved Tynesiders to develop a new phase of character in 1871. Their first expression of opinion on the point had a humour, perhaps not meant:

"A number of the respectable and intelligent Irishmen," said the manifesto, with a brave assertion of social and intellectual gifts, "resident in this town, seeing the

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necessity for having some institute established in the town for the mental and intellectual improvement of Irishmen generally in Newcastle and Gateshead——” (Continuity of thought failed here.) “In furtherance of this idea a meeting was held at the Portland Arms Inn, New Bridge Street, on April 2nd, 1871, and a committee was formed to take steps to provide the object in view. The following gentlemen were appointed as the committee to bring about the above object: B. M’Anulty, John McShane, Thomas Smith, John Mullen (not bootmaker—furniture), P. Jennings, M. Verdon.” The committee eventually resolved that “An Irish Institute be established in Newcastle-upon-Tyne for the cultivation of Irish literature, and the moral and social improvement of its members. President, Stephen Quin. Treasurer, B. M’Anulty. Joint Secretaries, M. Verdon and Jos. Heenan.”

Immortality seemed to be destined for that Institute. It fixed itself, apparently for all time, in Clayton Street, Newcastle. All Irish Tyneside political and social activity circled around it. On February 18th, 1874, Mr. Edward Savage and an obscure “Mr. T. Healy” became members. The unknown developed into the known. The Institute started the career of Mr. Timothy Healy, K.C., M.P. At that time he was a youthful clerk in the North Eastern Railway Offices. He had been introduced to Newcastle by Mr. John Barry, who, in turn, was proposed as a member by Healy.

Barry was secretary of the Fenian amnesty movement, and with the Institute’s help he organised one of the greatest demonstrations ever seen in Newcastle. An

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enormous procession of Tynesiders marched to the Town Moor to demand the release of felon Fenians. The amnesty association eventually brought many an unhappy political victim from the shadow of prison walls to the sunshine of home.

That final act of human mercy was largely helped by a Tyneside Englishman in the House of Commons, Mr. Joseph Cowen, M.P. for Newcastle.

CHAPTER III

TYNESIDE AND PARNELL

FENIANS and constitutionalists used the Literary Institute in Clayton Street as a common camp where, in their own favourite fashion, they could discuss and develop their darling plans for Ireland's salvation by bullet or ballot.

It was a ramshackle three-storey Institute which had once been the town house of a Newcastle magnate. Its stairs were wide, foot-worn and uneven, and all its floors were lopsided from age and failing foundations. Its square exterior had a solemn, drab and forlorn expression as if it regretted its past—in a well-bred way. One of its most astonishing members was W. R. Haughton, who enlisted in the 1870 Irish Brigade in France, under General Bourbaki, and fought against the Germans. He had been a Belfast Orangeman until he settled in Newcastle as manager of the Globe Parcel Company and mixed with his Nationalist countrymen. The patriotic instinct came out, and from being an Orangeman he changed into a Fenian. He plotted deeply against the government, learned how to drill, practised shooting diligently, and was ready at any moment to give his life for freedom. He thrilled the Institute with "Fontenoy"; and when the Franco-German War was over, he returned to Newcastle,

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and marched proudly along its streets in his tattered French uniform.

Patrick Jennings, one of the Institute founders, had a modest nature. Though trusted by everybody he would not take office of any kind. He was a tobacconist in Nun Street. He came from Newry. He was remarkably well-read, and his advice and guidance were more often sought than any one else's in the local movement. His nephew, Peter Byrne, also a Newry man and a member of the Institute, was imprisoned for his patriotism by Balfour. Michael Kelly was a great Fenian and principal of Newcastle Catholic High School—a man of high intellectual attainments, and a fine classical scholar. Edward Savage, who joined the Institute with Tim Healy, held a responsible position in the North Eastern Railway Offices. Savage's life was one of continuous self-sacrifice for nationalism. He advocated consitutional action. John Walsh of Middlesbrough, who often visited the Institute, had worked in the blast-furnaces, and had the honour of being one of the four representatives of Great Britain on the supreme council of the Fenian brotherhood. He had a gigantic body and a titanic mind. No man inspired or deserved such absolute confidence as did John Walsh in the Fenian movement. Later, he was one of the first to recognise the irresistible force of "political power," and he joined the constitutionalists. O'Donovan Rossa, whose arguments were made of gunpowder, frequently held important councils at the Institute.

Remarkable as it may seem, all that these splendid men were risking their lives for was the "legislative free-

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dom of Ireland." They asked little and suffered much.

Biggar and Parnell were also giving lessons in political education, by obstructing business in the House of Commons night and day, and showing clearly that if England would not grant Home Rule to Ireland, Ireland would not give Home Rule to England.

The fight being waged by these two members against six hundred and seventy, was followed by Tynesiders with rising excitement. Parnell, dazzling the world with his extraordinary tactics and mysterious personality, became their new hope. The weapon of "political power," roughly forged in the creative brains of Daniel O'Connell and Thomas Davis, had been shaped to flashing and deadly perfection by the genius of Parnell. Here, at last, his countrymen declared enthusiastically, was their true champion whose skill and courage could defend and save Ireland from her enemies. Tyneside sent its representatives to the Liverpool convention in 1877, called for the resolute purpose of nominating Parnell as leader of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain.

The task of deposing Isaac Butt, first president of that immense "political power," was painful to everybody concerned. Butt's policy had neglected the principle laid down by Thomas Davis: Let Ireland put no faith in whig or tory, but trust only herself. Parnell was brilliantly obeying that principle. John Barry, who had been instrumental in electing Butt to the presidency, had observed his old leader's well-meant policy with sympathy for his gentle nature, and deep disappointment at his methods. Barry, despite the acute sorrow he, like all

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his colleagues, felt for Butt, supported the election of Parnell, who was then unanimously chosen by the convention as its new leader.

One of the Fenians released from prison by the amnesty movement which Mr. Joseph Cowen had so finely helped, was Michael Davitt, pale and haggard, but with hope and determination putting a glitter in his dark, deep-set eyes. While suffering cruelly enough in prison, Davitt had worked out plans for a powerful campaign against the vile system of landlordism. He had gained Parnell's active support, and came to Newcastle to win Tyneside over to the new league. Davitt had been warned not to come, because some of his former Fenian colleagues there regarded his constitutionalism as treachery to their principles, and had sworn to avenge it. Fenianism had not been entirely conquered by the new movement, and the idea of armed force as a political argument still flourished in isolated quarters.

Davitt, always fearless, was not a man to be deterred by danger. But he did not underrate the warning. At Newcastle railway station a few of his friends who had arranged to meet him that night found him marching up and down the platform, his bright eyes flashing warily, glancing left, right, ahead and behind, as if expecting attacks from all quarters. He explained cheerfully that he should not be at all surprised if he were shot before he reached the place of meeting.

In the hall, which was crowded, an Irish priest was chairman. When Davitt's turn to speak came, the first thing he did, as he stood up, was to take from his hip-

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pocket a neat, shining revolver and place it quietly on the table, within good reach of his arm. He tried to begin his speech, but with his first words came uproar from the body of the hall, where a mob broke loose and rushed towards the platform. He stood quite still, his hand on the revolver. The wild gang tried to clamber to the platform. The Irish priest who presided lashed into them with his stout walking-stick. They tried to evade the blows and reach Davitt, but the priest's stick, like an enchanted sword, was everywhere around him. For one hour and a half pandemonium lasted. Davitt stood at the table, calmly waiting till the disturbers became exhausted and ashamed, and disappeared. Then he delivered his speech. It is reliably declared that Davitt would have been shot that night if the priest had not defended him. But whatever harm they might have been foolish enough to do to Davitt, not one of the struggling, yelling madmen attempted to lay a finger on "his reverence," who was welting into them unmercifully with his big stick, every whack of which was taken as if it were a pious blessing, and no doubt it was if it helped to keep a contemplated black sin from their souls.

Later the "No. 1 Branch of the Irish National League of Great Britain" held its meetings at the Institute. When Parnell's tragedy split the nationalist ranks, a "No. 1 Branch of the Parnell Leadership Committee" was also formed there, with Mr. John Lavery as its Secretary; Mr. Stephen Bannon, President; and Mr. Peter Bradley, Treasurer. The national league branch continued as before,

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and the two groups held their meetings in the same camp but on different nights.

Deep wounds were made in the heart of Tyneside by the short but terrible controversy. A national league convention was held in Newcastle to strengthen the organisation in its fight. Parnell determined, in his own masterly phrase, to keep a firm grip on Tyneside, and hastily organised a demonstration at Newcastle on July 19th, 1891, as a counterblast to the league convention. He arrived alone on the Saturday afternoon, no longer cool and dispassionate, but pallid-faced and feverish, his extraordinary eyes flashing and restless. He crossed from the station to the County Hotel, where he arranged to stay for the night, leaving his supporters to find him as best they could. Mr. John Lavery, Mr. Stephen Bannon, Mr. Peter Bradley and other officers of his leadership committees discovered him eventually, and a private conference was held in the hotel.

Parnell had been advertised to speak at the demonstration that night. A Sunderland band played him to the town hall. His audience gathered very leisurely and quietly.

A special reserve force of police had been appointed to quell expected conflicts between his devotees and their opponents. But few Tynesiders felt any animosity at all against him; and fewer still had the heart to interfere with one who had made so deep a mark on their esteem and affection. The special reserve of police had nothing to do but to keep out of the way. The only diversion in the meeting was caused by the outgoing of one or two inebriates

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whose awkward movements created good-humoured laughter. Exactly nine addresses of welcome from that number of local districts were presented to Parnell. His speech was bold and masterful. His confident assumption that his leadership would prevail brought enthusiastic applause, some dissent, and—the great demonstration was over. It was a significant prelude to the great tragedy of his death within a few months of that visit to Tyneside.

CHAPTER IV

IRISH POLITICAL POWER ON TYNESIDE—OUTBREAK OF WAR—HOME RULE IN THE BALANCE

NEWCASTLE and its district could not, would not believe the news of Parnell's death. It seemed to be an impossibility. John Lavery told journalists who came to interview him that the report was a delusion, and Tyneside devotees for some time confidently awaited Parnell's resurrection. A decade later, during the Boer War, when General De Wet's attacks kept a British army in trouble for nearly three years, the rumour that the mysterious rebel soldier was Parnell was more readily accepted than the fact of his death.

Political wounds were gradually healed by the election of Mr. John Redmond, member for Waterford and Parnellite leader, as chairman of a reunited parliamentary party. Mr. Redmond's public and private motives had been fiercely assailed during the bitter controversy. He had either ignored those attacks, or had dealt with them in a parliamentary tone. It could not be doubted that he was unshaken in questions of principle or honour, but he had an admirable way of demonstrating that fact without being led into vituperation; and his conduct had convinced all sections that they could work together under him. His self-restraint seemed to have been due less to

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political foresight than to an innate good-breeding. Mr. Redmond, at that time, was a little over forty years of age—a fair-complexioned, well-built, well-dressed man, with a large, curving aristocratic nose and a calm, impressive dignity in his manner. His chief personal characteristic was a most charming amiability which, in private, revealed the secret of a delightful, human warm-heartedness. But in public, he was cold, detached and severely statesmanlike. When he stood on a platform or rose in his place at the House of Commons, the austere senator had mounted the tribune. He had a Roman face and mind. His thoughts seemed to have been drilled in irrefutable axioms of polity. A speech of his resembled a piece of classic architecture gleaming icily in winter sunlight, and built up of ideas that were like strong columns quarried from the marble of ancient Greece or Rome, with phrasing as clear-cut as lines made by a sculptor's chisel. His argument would stand for ever. Time might wear away the decorations a little, but not the foundations, which were rooted in the truth, and only a moral earthquake could cause the fabric to tremble and fall.

Leadership had been ceded to Mr. Redmond by Mr. John Dillon, M.P., who was chairman of the anti-Parnellites, the major group of the party. Mr. Dillon had every gift of oratory except form. Eloquence came from his lips like the fires of half a dozen volcanoes, all in a state of eruption at the same time, with the wind scattering smoke and flames indiscriminately over the whole world. In appearance he was tall, sombre, black-bearded, dark-

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featured, and altogether shadowy. The look in his shining, black eyes was that of a visionary—a dreamy recluse who had stalked out of a monk's cell one evening in a fit of abstraction, had lost his way and wandered into the House of Commons by mistake, and was weary of the place. He was, in fact, a political saint. The purity of his character shone through all obscurities. For the sake of unity he had given up the world for his soul; and, judging by the spirit of self-effacement shown in his career, there seemed to be no sacrifice that he would not make for his country's good.

Around Mr. John Redmond as the new leader, Tyneside Irishmen became united once more. Largely they were still unskilled labourers along the riverside and about the mine, but some amongst the new generation had made their way against bad difficulties into the skilled ranks of fitters, engineers, moulders, platers and colliery-workers. Their industry and ability brought good wages, while their mental gifts won them official places in the trade unions, particularly in the mining districts of North-umberland and Durham. A few had become foremen, gangers, and even employers. In Newcastle itself some of the wealthiest and most influential citizens were nationalists. They were prominent in the professions. They owned business houses and they were mayors, aldermen, town councillors and members of boards of guardians. On every local governing body exiles of Erin or their descendants were watching and fostering the interests of faith and nationality. These interests had to be reckoned with in every kind of municipal or parliamentary election.

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Young Irish men and women who had never seen Ireland were yet so inspired with the sense of nationality that they held all other political affairs as secondary things. Political power, which at one time had seemed a vague policy, had become a serious reality, devoted, above all, to the re-establishment of a parliament in Dublin, with the green flag floating over it as the symbol of a nation's freedom. That lawful prize had been withheld, and Tyneside felt the injustice bitterly.

John Daly and O'Donovan Rossa, the released Fenian prisoners, visited Newcastle and held meetings in Ginnett's Circus to advocate a political felon amnesty. During O'Donovan Rossa's visit (1895) Alderman J. F. Weidner was Sheriff. He had taken a splendid part in the movement, and in recognition of his services Newcastle Irishmen had presented him with an address at a dinner given to him when his period of office ended.

Newcastle celebrated the rebellion of '98 at a great centenary banquet on May 10th, 1898. One hundred years after Emmet's glorious failure his countrymen in Northumbria were keeping his fame and ideals brilliantly alive, and organising themselves for victory, no matter how long their claim might be denied.

The Irish had helped every creed and nationality in the United Kingdom to gain better social conditions, and English, Scottish and Welsh workers had come to understand that their interests and those of Ireland were identical. Thomas Davis had foreseen that potent result. All British democracy, the overwhelming mass of the population, had been won to the national cause.

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Gladstone's lead had brought two attempts to carry Home Rule through Parliament, but failed owing to political lunacy in the House of Lords and political betrayal in the House of Commons by Joseph Chamberlain who, all his previous life, had been loud in demand for Home Rule, but, now, changed suddenly and was loud in denouncing it.

Chamberlain, in 1904, made Gateshead the supreme test of his policy of treachery, and sent Lord Morpeth to contest the seat and, incidentally, to smash Home Rule for ever. Tyneside nationalists determined to smash Chamberlain instead, by putting in Johnson, a Home Rule candidate, and called up Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., to help them in their historic fight.

Mr. Devlin was the right kind of champion in that fateful arena. He had just returned across the Atlantic, from a vast tour for Ireland's cause in America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. His success had brought him extraordinary fame, and had established him as one of the new leaders of the Irish race. He had risen from the nationalist ranks in Belfast, and had been elected to parliament while thousands of miles away. He was a young man, short in stature, with the massive head and singularly inoffensive glance of the born fighter. In complexion he was neither dark nor fair. Full, prominent eyes and a broad brow are known to indicate gifts of intellect and eloquence. He possessed those signs in a marked degree. The look in his well-shaped, youthful face, which was stamped unmistakably with Hibernian characteristics, had much of the Celtic dreamer seeking,

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above all things, seclusion and repose from haunting visions that give no mental rest. Yet his hidden, combative individuality marked the mildness of his expression with a strange, masculine force. In the presence of strangers, he showed a shrinking sensitiveness. But something, it was impossible to define what, made his manner extremely attractive. He was shy and reserved until he stood before an audience. Then his genius was set free.

He held his tenth and last meeting on the eve of the poll, in Gateshead town hall. A cheering audience packed the hall, and, outside, thousands of people surged at the doors.

Never had Tyneside Irish enthusiasm reached such a climax as when the poll was declared. Joseph Devlin had beaten Joseph Chamberlain by a majority of more than twelve hundred votes out of a total of fifteen thousand. It was not Home Rule, but the betrayer of Home Rule, that was smashed at Gateshead.

Ten years later the best measure of self-government ever offered to Ireland since the days of Grattan's independent parliament had, on two distinct occasions under the same liberal ministry, passed all readings in the British House of Commons, had been twice rejected by the House of Lords, had again been read a second time, and was waiting for the final third reading which would place Home Rule on the statute book in defiance of the lords of England, exactly one hundred and fourteen years after the last Irish parliament had been destroyed. The House of Lords would be powerless after one more reading in the

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lower house, because a Parliament Act had provided that any measure passed in three consecutive sessions by the Commons was law, whether the upper chamber liked it or not.

In the pause, just before the last division on the bill, Germany suddenly made up her deformed mind to declare war on the world. France and Russia had already received their challenges from Germany, and were drawing their swords to defend themselves.

Amid brilliant sunshine and peaceful holiday happiness, that autumn of 1914 saw the opening of the most horrible and unnecessary war in history—war such as the world had dreamed of but had hoped would never be anything but a dream; war made by the scientific savages of Germany against civilisation. The outcome would be likely to inspire the poetry and philosophy of posterity with visions more powerful than even those with which the memory of the glory and tragedy of ancient Rome and the vagaries of imperial destiny fill our imagination to-day.

As if it were the work of evil elements that had always seemed to be conspiring to thwart Ireland's dearest wishes, the trouble broke out on the closing struggle for Home Rule—the longest fight for national freedom ever known, seeing that it had been going on for seven hundred years and had not quite finished yet.

With Home Rule in the balance and Britain at war with a powerful, unscrupulous enemy, the political situation was one of extreme delicacy. Germany had formed its plans upon the certainty of serious trouble arising

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between England and Ireland, and the cabinet was unconsciously helping the enemy to carry out those plans.

Yet never was a dangerous crisis handled with finer political wisdom by the nationalist leaders. In interviews with ministers, in conferences with officers of the nationalist organisation, in public debate at Westminster, the highest interests of all concerned were advocated. What was best for both Ireland and the empire was put forward with an unwavering consistency, clearness and ability.

The government named a day in September for the final reading of the bill. It should come into operation as soon as the war was over.

The Irish placed absolute faith in that treaty of September, 1914, with the British Government.

Through the House of Commons the measure passed to Buckingham Palace, and left there with King George's signature. Erin had regained her freedom. Her parliament in Dublin would be restored to her, and her supreme ideal had become a reality. No party, without eternal dishonour, could break the signed treaty which that memorable day made her an ally of the British empire.

In varying forms the struggle had lasted for nearly a thousand years. Irish chieftains had fought Norman knights. Irish armies had broken, and had been broken by, English armies. Irish parliaments had defied British parliaments. Irish rebels against misrule had been hanged, drawn and quartered by British executioners, or had died as transported felons, or in British prisons. Irish representatives had made government impossible at Westminster. Now their "political power" had gained what

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had been denied to the sword. No defeat could follow the victory. It had the immortal elements in it, the principle of human destiny, because it had been won by constitutional liberty which, itself, was the lasting triumph of civilisation.

That was the Irish feeling at the time.

A strange welcome awaited this supreme moment in Ireland's history. No pompous display of self-glorification, no ostentatious flourish, no parade of any kind was visible. Not a cheer or a joyous exclamation was heard. The heart kept the secret of its happiness. Ireland, at the end of all her trouble, saw her old enemy in distress—forced into war by a German bully. Ireland's honour had no stain. Her history was around her beautiful head like the shining halo of a saint. She felt sorry for Great Britain, and hid her own joy.

Extraordinary tact and delicacy were in that self-restraint. Nationalists would no more have dreamed of celebrating their success at that moment than any well-bred person would think of breaking into callous, noisy laughter in the sick-room of a friend who was threatened with death.

“Now,” asked Britishers, whose high sense of fair-play in helping at election after election to disenthral the sister isle proved that British democracy had always been a friend of Ireland, “what will the Irish do for us?”

Ireland never broke a treaty.

CHAPTER V

FORMATION OF THE TYNESIDE IRISH BRIGADE

WHAT Irish Tyneside felt about the war was quickly seen. Recruiting offices in Newcastle and throughout Northumberland and Durham suddenly overflowed with Irish youths, rushing to get a share in the fighting.

After enlisting, recruits were instructed to report themselves at various depots and barracks, where it was expected they would find food and shelter.

Owing to the congested state of the depots, the authorities were unable to admit many of the new-comers; and hundreds of young Irishmen, unable to return to their homes in various districts, were found sleeping about Newcastle central station, in shop doorways, and out on the town moor, exposed to the rains and chills of autumn nights.

Nationalists, ever watchful where the interests of their compatriots were concerned, provided what shelter was possible. The secretary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Mr. J. McLarney, seeing the lads shelterless and hungry, found room for as many as he could at his own place. He gave them supper, a night's rest, and breakfast; and arranged for them to be sent back to barracks as soon as they could be received there.



IRISH VICTORIA CROSS WINNERS.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. CAPT. J. A. O. BROOKE. | 2. COMM. THE HON. E. B. S. BINGHAM. | 3. LT. FREDK. M. W. HARVEY. |
| 4. CPL. FREDK. J. EDWARDS. | 5. CPL. JOHN CUNNINGHAM. | 6. SGT. ROBT. DOWNIE. |
| 7. PTE. THOS. WOODCOCK. | 8. LCE.-CPL. FREDK. G. ROOM. | 9. LCE.-SGT. JOHN MOYNEY. |
| 10. MAJ. GEO. CAMPBELL WHEELER. | 11. SGT. ROBERT QUIGG. | 12. CPL. THOS. HUGHES. |

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Leading Tyneside Irishmen were driven to seek a solution of the dangerous problem that had so unexpectedly arisen over the well-being of their compatriots.

The point could not possibly be kept out of friendly conversation at the Newcastle National Club, which was the Irish Literary Institute under a new name. The old regime had inspired many conversations of a different kind. Fenians had whispered of guns and pikes there, when any mention of British armies had to be made; and the muzzles of those guns were to be directed towards the government. Political felons, John Daly, O'Donovan Rossa, Michael Davitt, and more, had been visitors to the Institute, with the red marks of prison chains still visible upon their limbs, the agony of the dungeon in their pale faces and bent, weakened bodies, and the fire of hate against England flaming in their eyes. They had suffered for their love of Ireland. Their passion had not changed.

From a private conference there, the following proposal was made public in the "Evening Chronicle" on September 12th, 1914:—"In order to assist the country in this terrific struggle, we suggest that an Irish regiment be formed on Tyneside which Irishmen of all classes and denominations can join. The number of Irishmen resident in this district is a large one, and although great numbers of our countrymen have already joined, we believe it is possible to get the necessary number of men who, no doubt, would prefer to enlist in such a regiment of a distinctive character in which all would be comrades and friends."

This historic document has the value of placing for ever on the records of the public life of our entire community

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that, at the moment when the peril of German tyranny threatened to impose slavery on the free inhabitants of this empire, nationalist Tynesiders, voicing the feelings of their compatriots in every city, town, and village of Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales and the far-off colonies, accepted the challenge of Teutonic barbarism, and openly declared that the Irish would fight to the last man side by side with British democracy in the battle for civilisation.

In less than a week the battalion was almost ready. But from an unexpected quarter came a fatal blow. On September 20th at the National Club, Mr. Patrick Bennett presented his committee with the Army Council's letter, which curtly stated that the military authorities could not approve of a Tyneside Irish Battalion being formed. "Irish recruits," added the letter, "could join the Northumberland Fusiliers."

The War Office vetoed Irish friendship for British democracy.

Nearly a thousand men had joined. The honourable scroll recording their names fluttered to the ground, the office doors were sadly closed, the recruits were disbanded, and darkness fell upon the Tyneside Irish battalion.

War Office ways were inscrutable. As with Tyneside, so with Ireland. Mr. John Redmond had sent remonstrances by the score against the unsympathetic and embarrassing recruiting methods adopted by the military authorities. Nationalist efforts were thwarted, and nothing but antagonism was left in the atmosphere. The Irish leader at the outset had offered 25,000 volunteers for the defence of Ireland. That offer, if taken, would

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set free 25,000 regular troops for the firing line. It was declined.

When Zeppelins were hurling horrible bombs upon London, destroying inoffensive women and children, it was rumoured that the murderers were aiming at the War Office.

"No," dissented an English catholic home ruler, "the Germans will never try to harm the War Office. It's their best friend."

Lord Haldane, on behalf of the Secretary for War, visited Newcastle, on October 10th, 1914, to assist in recruiting. The Lord Mayor, Mr. Johnstone Wallace, an Irish unionist, re-stated the case for raising an Irish battalion. War Office permission was reluctantly given at last, and the Lord Mayor called in Mr. Felix Lavery, an Irish nationalist, to help him. The result was not merely the raising of one battalion, but the raising of four complete battalions, with reserves, forming an entire Tyneside Irish Brigade.

From beginning to end, twelve weeks represented the actual time it had taken to create a force of five and a half thousand men, and they were, in the best sense, men—clear-eyed, clean-limbed fellows of first-class physique, strong and healthy enough to endure the strain and hardships of modern warfare.

When the limited section of the population and hundreds of towns and villages throughout which the people were scattered are considered, the achievement seems to be not only extraordinary, but without any rival in the history of the world.

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Success could only have been due to hard work done by individual members of a committee which, as proved in the results, based its operations on well-chosen methods and unity of purpose, amounting in the combined effect to organising genius. The nature of this gift is that it perceives the existence of valuable elements, wasting for want of connected effort, draws them together, binds them into manageable form, and directs them like a torpedo towards a definite object as one co-ordinated, irresistible force.

The raw materials in this case were Irish Tynesiders. They were true to their heritage. Their countrymen all over the world are first to defend liberty and strike boldly at tyranny or injustice, because the legacy handed down to them from the long national struggle endured by their forefathers made the Irish politically educated. When that fact is realised it will be understood that they initiate all their own agitation. Their leaders have been wrongly accused of agitating for followers. In reality the followers agitate for leaders.

Tyneside nationalists revealed this quick understanding of the difference between political right and wrong immediately Home Rule was assured after the outbreak of war. They had rushed in haphazard scores, hundreds and thousands to join British regiments. They, of their own free will, without any advice but the dictates of native honour, bravery and an entirely noble instinct of goodwill towards the land of their adoption, had offered themselves for service with their traditional fighting quality pulsating in their hearts. They could not wait. They were willing to join the first regiment they could find. So long as they

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could get a chance to reach the firing-line they did not care where or how they went. Their own leaders, influenced by this revelation of magnificent manhood in their midst, and eager to let it be seen by the whole world for the glory of Ireland, had desired from the outset to band their countrymen together. No praise could be too high for the committee that ultimately carried out this patriotic task in such a brilliant manner. But let it never be forgotten that it was the full, warm, exalted enthusiasm found at Nationalist firesides in all Northumberland, Durham and Cumberland, and the high-principled gallantry of the recruits themselves that really created the Tyneside Irish Brigade.

CHAPTER VI

TYNESIDE IRISH BRIGADE ORDERED INTO THE FIRING LINE

IN April, 1915, the different battalions were gathered from their various billets on Tyneside and placed under canvas near Newcastle, and a few weeks later the entire brigade was transferred to Sutton Veny, on the edge of Salisbury Plain. In the autumn news came that the Tynesiders were soon to be under orders for the firing line.

The feeling of the committee for the brigade which they had brought into being largely resembled the pride and affection of a mother for a darling child, and they wished to pay their offspring a farewell visit.

On Saturday morning, October 16th, 1915, the party set out, and arrived at Sutton Veny in the night. The camp was lit up by electric light which revealed apparently endless rows of huts stretching across Salisbury Plain in every direction.

Hospitality in all its most cheerful and friendly aspects, and particularly supper and bed, welcomed the travellers. Camp life, it was seen, had austerity as the chief part of a warlike training. Good food there was in plenty. The trappings of luxury were scarce. They had no place in

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the making of warriors. A small grey, iron stove, a square deal table, and a folding bedstead were the decorations of an officer's hut. There was no feathery couch raised high from draughty floors on a costly, shining frame. There were no gleaming, white sheets, no tinted, silken eiderdown quilts, no soft pile of pillows for weary heads and bodies to sink into with a sigh of happiness and wait in ecstasy for the fond and gentle touch of dreamless slumber on drowsy eyelids. The bed itself, so low that a drooping hand from it would scrape the boards, with a dark rug over a hard mattress, and one thick, brown blanket as a covering, showed clearly to men who were careful of their personal comfort the severity of the setting. Even sleep found no temptations in the camp.

A white fog, rising from and enveloping all the vast plain, turned Sunday morning into twilight, until steely sunrays, like a million bayonet points, pierced the vapour and made the interesting face of the camp visible. Officers were parading their men for Mass.

"Now then," called out boyish lieutenants, lashing hut doorposts with their canes, "any more R.C.'s (Roman Catholics) in there?"

The "R.C.'s" hurried out, buttoning up tunics or fastening belts. The hour was early and breakfasts had been snatched hastily. When all "R.C.'s" were out the places inside were deserted, and rows of empty "R.C." huts on a Sunday morning were the religious statistics of the brigade.

Mass was celebrated by the brigade chaplain, Father McBrearty, with two young officers as "altar boys," in

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a large recreation hall of corrugated iron, belonging to the Young Men's Christian Association. In that friendly protestant shelter the kneeling crowd in khaki uniforms, with belts and bayonets, made a strange spectacle at the holy sacrifice. After Mass the various companies were marched to their quarters, headed by the pipers' band.

For the benefit of the visitors, companies were put through bayonet drill and an infantry charge—the severest test of physical qualifications, as the men, going at the double with fixed bayonets, had to leap into deep trenches, perform the manœuvre of clearing out the enemy—represented by stuffed sacks—at the point of their weapons, leap out again, advance to further trenches, repeat the action, advance once more at the double, and leap in and out of a third row of trenches, at which stage the exercise was completed by the supposition that the enemy lines had been captured. The charge was a mimicry of what it would be like in actual warfare. The zest with which the men bayoneted make-believe Germans indicated their feelings on the subject of the war, while the energy and virility in their movements awakened sheer admiration for their strength of limb and body.

Among their officers was Lieutenant Esmonde, M.P., son of a true Irish patriot, the late Dr. Grattan Esmonde, M.P.

Another of the officers was a grandson of the great Daniel O'Connell himself, young Lieutenant Maurice O'Connell, linking up Tyneside with the high apostle of nationalism. Irish imagination could not help being stirred by the coincidence. Daniel O'Connell had been the first advocate

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of the constitutional principle by means of which Erin had at last escaped from the dark and loathsome dungeon of slavery, and now stood with the sunlight of freedom shining brilliantly upon her loveliness. A mere official order had drafted Maurice O'Connell into the Tyneside Irish, but it seemed as if the spirit of his immortal ancestor, wishing to bless all that they had done for the old land and be with them through all dangers, had appeared amongst them in the khaki uniform of a gracious young lieutenant.

An inspection parade revealed the wonderful improvement which a few months' regular military training had made in the men's appearance. How well and firmly these Tynesiders held themselves ! How alert and smart they looked ! Nature had made them healthy and sturdy, but their exercises and drill had added suppleness to virility, straightened their bodies, developed their chests and squared their shoulders. When they stood to attention no enemy, it seemed, could ever break through such unyielding ranks. They stood like two long lines of tall, upright rocks clothed in khaki. Their erect attitude had nothing strained about it. They wheeled, marched and handled their heavy rifles with as much ease as men in offices might guide penholders. Their features had a clean, wholesome freshness ; their cheeks had the glow of health ; their eyes a cheerful brightness ; and altogether their manly, gallant bearing made them a proud sight for an Irishman to behold.

But a little time ago they had been toilers in mines or works, at laborious tasks, and in surroundings that cramped and stiffened bodies, arms and legs. It seemed to be

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incredible that a few months had transformed them into disciplined, efficient soldiers. The raw material could only have been as excellent as the training.

Other changes had a deeper meaning. The grandfathers and grandmothers of these dashing fellows were the poor emigrants of two generations ago, when men in white woollen jackets with no buttons, and women in picturesque, red petticoats, with shawls for bonnets, had kneeled humbly and gratefully to the Creator of the Tyne which had given them refuge and a livelihood, though they were long unable to stifle the hatred burning in their hearts against England as the cause of all the wrong that had been done. They had been willing to endure the loss of all they possessed, but they vowed that their country should never lose her right to nationhood. They were humble before the good God, but not before their bad rulers. Pride as great as humility was in their prayer—pride of their native land, pride in her ancient repute, her unchanging faith and unstained honour, for love of which ruin had fallen upon her race. Yet not even worldly ruin could shake her people's devotion to her name and glory. For themselves they asked only a morsel of bread and fire to keep hunger and cold from their families, and the winding banks of Tyne became long altars upon which more and more sacrifices were offered up to Ireland, amidst clouds of smoke and flame from the furnaces where the outcasts laboured. Their story was the greatest of all—the mighty epic of obscure, unrecorded heroism that is despised and disregarded because it is humble.

In the years that had passed, had their descendants

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lost the only treasure which the emigrants had saved from their country's wreck—their priceless loyalty to her? Such a disaster might have overtaken a different race, but with all the generations of exiles, scattered to the earth's extremities, no matter how obscure their homes or how remote they might be from Ireland, the angel of her nationality had winged its sentinel rounds, preserving the love of Erin's children for the old land in uncontaminated purity, making her ultimate triumph so sure that destiny, which had seemed to be bent on her destruction, had yielded at last. The parents' story was ended. Their sons were beginning another.

An Irish brigade of immortal fame fought for France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and again in 1870, in the fight against the Germans. Another Irish brigade fought for America in the nineteenth. In both cases those heroes were exiles or the descendants of exiles who had been driven from their native land by misrule, which had made Irishmen regard a British government as their hereditary enemy. But it was not only the exiles who suffered. At Fontenoy the Irish brigade charged the Duke of Cumberland's troops and scattered them, with the cry of "Remember Limerick!" And the king of England, seeing disaster brought upon his army in France by the brilliant fighting qualities of men whom his own government had sent into exile, exclaimed bitterly: "Curse the laws that deprived me of such soldiers!"

Bearing these strange elements in mind, the raising of an Irish brigade on the Tyneside, a warlike body, of

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splendid physique and traditional bravery, confessedly intended to fight on the side of England, is the phenomenon of a thousand years, a miracle that deserves to be examined seriously. When Belgium was martyred, to Germany's everlasting dishonour—when Belgian frontiers were invaded and Belgian men, women, children and priests were slaughtered by German butchers, Mr. Joseph Devlin uttered a warning to his countrymen: "The frontiers of Belgium are the frontiers of Ireland." This imaginative view might be a guide, yet would not completely explain the change in the hearts of Irish dwellers on the Tyne towards British governments. Only in heaven itself are the causes of a miracle fully understood. Human intelligence saw only one simple explanation. Home Rule had been placed on the statute book at last. Ireland's hour of glory, her legislative and national freedom had come, and all antagonism had gone, because, apart from governments, the two peoples of Great Britain and Ireland had always been friends; and now, when danger threatened the great places of the world where Irishmen had found shelter in their time of distress, all had chivalrously responded to the cry for help. The fight was still for liberty.

These fine Irish soldiers from Tyneside were but a fragment of the grand manhood which their compatriots in all parts of the British Empire were sending to the battlefield.

"When I call to mind," said Lord Kitchener to the Dublin Conference, "the bravery and gallant exploits of Irish soldiers . . . the Irish are entitled to a full share

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of compliments. Their recruiting has been magnificent.”

Mr. John Redmond declared in the House of Commons on November 2nd, 1915, that from England and Scotland alone one hundred and twenty-three thousand men of Irish birth had joined the army since the outbreak of war. One hundred thousand of these volunteers were home rulers.

Great Britain sent two hundred thousand volunteers of Irish blood to the war; Canada, New Zealand and Australia enrolled over one hundred thousand recruits of Irish birth or descent; while one hundred and fifty thousand soldiers born of Irish parents were in the army previous to the war, making a total of, roughly, more than half a million Irish soldiers in the army of the British empire.

The most famous of British generals, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Roberts and Sir John French were Irish; as were at least two chiefs of the navy, Admiral Beatty and Lord Charles Beresford; while, as the war proceeded, out of the confusion and carnage Irish valour kept continually rising into public notice above that of all other soldiers. The Victoria Cross, the highest distinction for bravery in battle, was worn by a proportionately larger number of Irish heroes than by those of other nationalities. The Irish Guards, when Germans were advancing four to one, saved the day during the disastrous retreat from Mons in August, 1914. The Munster Fusiliers and Dublin Fusiliers were first to land on bloody Gallipoli to fight the Turks in the summer of 1915. The Inniskillings, at Kevin Crest, on December 6th, 1915, kept the Bulgars back till

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not an Inniskilling was left alive, and the Tenth Irish Division, including Dublins, Munsters and Connaught Rangers, under General Mahon, in December, 1915, fought at Doiran three days without stopping, outnumbered by ten to one; yet they protected the French flank and altogether rescued the British army from destruction by Bulgaria in the march to the Vardar in Salonika.

Great generals and admirals, and nearly half a million sons of Ireland in the ranks, showed that Lord Kitchener was right in saying that "magnificent" was the only word to describe the Irish share of Britain's fighting material.

With night in the camp of Tyneside Irish came the moment of farewell. In the officers' quarters "The West's Awake" and "Who fears to speak of '98" were sung. The humour of warning England to "quake" in the camp of a British army was not disregarded. Irishmen have the gift of being able to laugh at ideals for which they are prepared to make the last sacrifice. The reason of their presence in a British camp that night was the outward sign of an inner nobility. They would probably see their enemies before they again saw the friends who, outside the huts, in the darkness, after the last great leave-taking, sang "God Save Ireland" as a blessing on the Tyneside Irish Brigade, in the ranks of which men and officers knew that they were going to war, not only for the eternal principles of liberty, justice and civilisation, but also for the sake of Erin's beloved self.

EPILOGUE

THE TYNESIDE IRISH IN THE FIGHT

ASSOCIATED with the Tyneside Irish Brigade were many men of military eminence. Lieut.-General Sir H. C. O. Plumer, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., as Commander of the Northern Force, took a lively interest in the raising, training and equipment of the brigade, and was instrumental in smoothing the path in a way which greatly facilitated the progress towards efficiency.

The Tyneside Irish Brigade went to the war as part of a division under the command of Maj.-Gen. Williams, C.B., D.S.O., already twice mentioned in despatches for operations in the European War. He had reached his 55th year when he became Major-General of this division. His decorations showed that he had served in the Sudan campaign, both the Nile expeditions and right through the South African war. In the Boer war alone his merits were alluded to in five despatches.

The brigade landed in France on January 10th, 1916. Its various battalions were in action at different parts of the firing line for many months, and always with distinction, as the large number of honours won prove.

On July 1st, 1916, all the battalions took part in the great Battle of the Somme. That was the long and terrible

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fight which broke the confidence of German generals, and shook all hope of victory out of them. Before it ended, the enemy was planning, not how to advance on Paris, but how to retreat far enough away to save the German army from capture or destruction.

During the night preceding the attack, the Irish were assembled in reserve trenches. Over their heads a bombardment of an intensity never known before in war was reaching its final stage. British guns, big and small, were flinging shells as countless as raindrops in a storm upon the enemy. It was a storm of metal and flame. It seemed to smash all shelter from death. There was no silence in the noise of guns, no blackness between red explosions that made the horizon a blazing furnace. In the furnace were the Germans. Roar and flames were like the endless thunder and fire of the last doom. It was day of judgment for the Germans.

Under this canopy of flying shells, the Irish, waiting for the word to attack, passed their time chatting good-humouredly or exchanging jokes that brought pleasant laughter, though the men were well aware that with the morning light would come work that might take life and laughter from them. Most of them slept comfortably, notwithstanding that the bombardment seemed loud enough to awaken the dead.

At seven-thirty a.m., the word was given to attack. They climbed out of their trenches under the song of the lark, with the sun just creeping up into the heavens in a slight mist, and, with bayonets fixed, began the advance. For many of them it was their first and last advance.

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Soon the Tynesiders were marching over dead bodies of their own comrades.

It was an inspiring sight to see those unfaltering lines pushing forward through an intense rain of shell fire and bullets, to be blown to pieces. Unfortunately the left suffered heavily, as the enemy had put down a double barrage to stop them.

Enemy machine-guns, cunningly hidden behind openings fitted with iron sliding doors which made detection almost impossible, were cutting them down in waves, as if an invisible scythe was sweeping through them. They faced the zone of death. They were young, untried soldiers, but they went on as fearlessly and as steadily as if they were old campaigners. At every step numbers fell wounded or dead. From behind, others came running up to fill the gaps. Nothing could be more heroic, self-sacrificing, or inspiring. The sight of their fallen friends fired their blood. The dead quickened them. Their steady movement changed into a forward rush as they neared the enemy trenches. They leaped over the parapet. The defending Germans fled or surrendered in terror to the gleam of steel. Those of the enemy who fought—fell. The first line was captured, and many Tyneside Irish bayonets, for the first time, bore the red mark of war.

Little breathing time was given. They had much further to go. Their objective was a village beyond. The second forward movement met a more stubborn resistance, but it was personal, individual courage that cleared the way. The enemy fought well until the bayonets came over the second parapet. Then came terrified appeals

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for mercy in German. Many of the enemy even fell upon their knees crying "Kamerad."

The third stage was the most difficult of all. Enemy reinforcements had been brought up, with a determination to hold the last line at all costs. The men who had gone through the first and second lines like a whirlwind were equally determined to smash the last defence. The fight for the third line was one of the fiercest episodes of the day. Again and again, fresh German troops were flung into the hand-to-hand struggle. The Irish, fighting at close quarters with bombs, bayonets, butt-ends of their rifles, and even with their fists, broke the spirit of their opponents, who in most cases were big men towering above the attackers. Yet it was these big Germans who began to fall back in disorder. And it was the lads of smaller bodies, but greater hearts, who finally cleared the trench in a wild rush that made them masters of the last line of defence. That day's fighting ended in triumph for the Tyneside Irish.

Later, a number of dead and wounded Tyneside Irishmen were actually discovered on the outskirts of Contalmaison. This in itself, throws great credit to the Brigade. It showed the bravery of the men.

Only about one-third came back to tell the story of the daring and great deeds and greater sacrifices of their brave comrades. The remnants of the Brigade were withdrawn on the third day.

The tribute paid to them by their Commander, Major-General Ingouville-Williams, has a pathos which his own death enhances: "My men did glorious deeds. Never

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have I seen men go through such a hell of a barrage of artillery. They advanced as on parade, and never flinched. I can't speak too highly of them. They earned a great record. But, alas! at a great cost. I am very sad at losing all my brave fellows, but so glad that their grand work is appreciated by the Corps Commander, Army Commander and Sir Douglas Haig. My brave men had to face a long advance to reach their objective. They were swept by that awful barrage—double barrage. Some got through, but could not remain so far off without support. They did their duty nobly. Never shall I cease singing the praises of my men, and I shall never have the same grand men to deal with again. I think they have done their part well, and their attack made all the subsequent success possible."

Their courage and endurance saved the flank of a division on their right. They were not aware of that at the time, but it was afterwards officially stated that they were responsible for the small casualty list of the division's left flank. Eager only to take their full share of the fighting, the Irish had gone forward wave upon wave, from which comrades fell like spray in the storm of rifle and machine-gun fire which was trying to drive them back. From start to finish, nothing grander had been seen than their attacks, carrying line after line of strong defences in magnificent style, which reached its finest point at the final, glorious bayonet charge.

On the following Easter Sunday night (1917) a reformed Brigade were in the trenches at Arras, around the Boyensart district, in front of Rocklin Court, and at 5.30 a.m.

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attacked again amid a terrific bombardment of shrapnel, high explosive and phosphorus shells, which was like a pyrotechnic display illuminating the sky for miles around, bringing into bold relief the extended waves of brave Tynesiders advancing with the bayonet.

The enemy was taken completely by surprise, and the first three lines of hostile trench were taken without any resistance. A German officer said: "We only thought the four minutes' hurricane bombardment was another raid." The Tynesiders pushed on all day, and by early next morning their objective was gained. They captured howitzers, machine guns, trench mortars, and even field guns, showing that the advance had been very rapid.

It was the Brigade's distinction to win two Victoria Crosses in this engagement—Lance-Corporal Bryan and Private T. Sykes being the first Northumberlands (to which regiment the Tyneside Irish Brigade was attached) to achieve the honour for fifty years. After a week's rest the Brigade joined in another attack on the Germans; and amongst the Brigade's later achievements was the part it played in the historic engagements in and around Ypres that led to the capture of the ridges overlooking the plains of Belgium.

In addition to the Victoria Crosses, many other honours, including several Distinguished Service Orders, Military Crosses and lesser distinctions were won.

Before the war came to an end, the Brigade fought itself to death. Sad to say, it no longer exists. It took part in so many battles that almost all its brave members were put out of action by wounds or the great sacrifice.

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One day, comrades brought to headquarters the battered remains of musical instruments which belonged to the brigade band. They had been picked up on the battlefield. They were practically all that was left of The Tyneside Irish Brigade.

Their combination of steadiness and dash, gallantry and resource, maintained the best traditions of the Irish fighting quality. Upon that quality British generals have based a well-tryed maxim, that Irish troops should always be included in any undertaking where an inspiring lead or an unyielding defence is absolutely necessary to avoid any risk of failure. In the retreat from Mons, one battalion (2nd) of the Munsters fought and beat seven German battalions, and saved the 1st British Army Corps at the price of almost self-extinction. Only one hundred and fifty Munsters out of one thousand were ever able to rejoin the Corps. The bayonets of Irish Guards at Mons received German cavalry and exterminated them. At Ypres, a Royal Irish Battalion fought until nothing was left of it. At Albert, an Irish piper from Tyneside found himself compelled to leap out of the trench at the signal to advance, and play his company over the parapet into action. He marched ahead, piping, through a storm of bullets which were wounding or killing his comrades all around him, until he himself fell among the wounded. In Gallipoli, the Munsters and Dublins landed where it seemed impossible that any human beings could live in the Turkish fire. The Irish not only landed, but captured the position and made it possible for other regiments to land after them. Men of the Tenth Irish division captured Chocolate Hill

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from the Turks, a feat which is still regarded as being without a parallel. Against the Bulgarians, men of the same Tenth Division, at Doiran, kept back ten times their number, protected the French flank and enabled them to retreat successfully, and undoubtedly saved the British Army in Salonika from disaster. This strange and famous Irish fighting quality comes less from the body than from the spirit within that body. They fight for the purest ideals of right, and their deepest desire is to face death with clean souls. Their courage is spiritual in its nature. And it is the spirit, not the flesh, that conquers.

JOSEPH KEATING.

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NAPOLEON once said that the British infantry was the best in the world. "Fortunately," he added, "there is very little of it." British generals have always recognised that, when it came to fighting—at all events for certain desperate uses, as what a celebrated critic, speaking of them, has called "missile troops"—Irish soldiers were perhaps the very best of the British line. Standards have changed; war itself has changed into a thing so much vaster, so much more terrible, that from 1914 to 1918 thousands of soldiers faced a hundred times dangers and horrors far worse than met the stormers in the breach of Badajos. Only one thing has remained constant—the amazing and appalling valour of disciplined manhood; and Irish troops have been more than true to their record. They have lived up to what was happiest in their tradition.

It may prove that never before was their valour of such worth or such high significance. As civilisation progresses, the soldier becomes less and less a mere fighter and more of a citizen, whose solid support lies in a sense of duty not merely to his regiment but to his country, and whose chief reward is in his country's gratitude.

Irish soldiers have stood happily apart from Irish poli-

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tics ; pride in their valour has been always an inheritance of all Ireland. Yet, if one considers the matter frankly, it is impossible not to see how far from natural and far from happy was the relation between Irish soldiers and Ireland. Take the great period of the Napoleonic wars, in which were laid the foundations of that belief which Sir William Butler at the close of a life's experience expressed in 1907 :

“The best soldier ever given to any nation was the Irish peasant.”

What they had seen and done may be judged by the record of a Regimental Order of Merit created in the Connaught Rangers some four years after Waterloo. There were then twenty sergeants and one hundred and ninety-five other ranks who had been in six general actions and upward, and of these, thirteen sergeants, six corporals, six drummers and forty-five privates had seen at least twelve battles. Yet after all what were they ? How far different from those Irish soldiers of France whom Miss Lawless has described :

“War-dogs hungry and grey
Gnawing a naked bone,
Fighters in every clime,
Every cause but our own.”

The soldier of France fought for France and for an emperor whom he idolised ; the English soldier, though, as Napier says, he “fought and conquered in the cold shade of aristocracy,” yet fought for England ; who could say that the Irish soldiers then fought for Ireland ? In that war Napoleon had his Irish brigade, few in numbers, it



CAPT. STEPHEN L. GWYNN.

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is true, but superb in quality, and in the Peninsula as at Ramillies, or Dettingen, or Fontenoy, Irish war-dogs were slipped from the leash on both sides.

The history of Irish soldiers, whether in British regiments or in other armies, has been hitherto tinged with a colour of recklessness, due to the lack of normal civic attachment. In the Great War, for the first time, it can be said with truth that Irishmen, not as individuals but in masses, came forward to serve with a high civic ideal, and their purpose, though not yet attained, is assuredly not yet defeated.

I endeavour to sketch the history of Irish regiments in relation to Ireland rather than to the British army; and I shall try to show how that relation has altered, becoming more intimate, more poignant, and, as I believe, nobler and more ennobling.

Irish regimental history—and for that matter all British regimental history—dates from the seventeenth century. Cromwell's army in Ireland was typical of the whole British forces of that date. It consisted of companies, raised very much as privateers were equipped, that is to say, by individuals for whom war was both a public duty and a private enterprise. The establishment of a regular army came under Charles II., when out of these independent garrison companies in Ireland were formed nineteen regiments. From one of these, Lord Granard's Foot, raised in 1684, our premier regiment is descended. In 1686, under James II., Tyrconnell undertook a remodelling of the Irish forces, and purged all the existing regiments of protestants. This led, not unnaturally, to a converse process. When William of Orange had won, all the Irish regiments

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were disbanded, with the single exception of Lord Granard's, in which the commanding officer, Lord Forbes, son of Lord Granard, had contrived to retain many of the original officers and non-commissioned ranks. The regiment, however, was cleared of some five hundred catholics, and it was filled up with Ulster protestants. Forbes himself, though Williamite in sympathy, resigned his command because he had sworn allegiance to James and would not serve against him. His place was taken by Lord Meath, under whom the regiment formed part of the force assembled by Schomberg at Dundalk; and it is noted that Lord Meath's command did not suffer so much as the rest of the troops at Dundalk from sickness because the Ulstermen were fully acclimatised. The regiment took part in the battle of the Boyne, but was not seriously engaged. It lost, however, very heavily at Limerick, being in the assault which was driven out from the Black Battery near St. John's Gate, when the first siege was raised. Thus the beginnings of our oldest regimental record tell only of war in Ireland against other Irishmen.

But it was not in Ireland that the regiment got its name. They went to the Low Countries with William, and at Namur in 1695 they were the "missile troops" selected to advance across a long stretch of open to the breach which had been battered in the citadel. For the gallantry with which they carried that stronghold they were given their title of the Royal Irish Regiment, and they bear emblazoned on their arms, "*Virtutis Namurcensis praeonium.*" Later, when the line was numbered, they took their place in it as the 18th Foot.

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Only one other Irish regiment of infantry comes near to the 18th in point of seniority, and that is the 27th—the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers; but it is linked by its origin to two famous cavalry corps—the 5th Royal Irish Dragoons, now the 5th Lancers, and the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons.

Much has been written, and justly, of the heroism which defended Derry; but as a military achievement, Enniskillen's record stands far higher. In truth, the cases are not comparable. At Derry a body of ordinary townsfolk, hampered and greatly imperilled by a treacherous command, at the last moment closed their gates and stood at bay behind walls. At Enniskillen a muster from a wide countryside, gentry and farmers, men naturally made for war, drew together in a town which they used as their base, and never let an enemy come near it. Far from that, they carried war into the enemy's camp, south and west; they won in all directions and against no contemptible antagonists: on one side they had Berwick to deal with and on another Sarsfield. They were essentially the type of a race that has come in as conquerors and has needed to hold its own by the sword among a much larger number whom it has disarmed. But when the conquered or their allies came against them, armed now and embattled, they were more than equal to the test. It is no wonder that out of this fierce garrison William should have levied all the horse and foot he could for permanent soldiering, and it is typical of the class which composed it that two of the three regiments should have been dragoons—mounted men.

King William paid to Inniskillingers the greatest tribute

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a king could bestow when he chose to cross the Boyne at the head of four troops of the Inniskilling Dragoons ; and after his victory was complete in Ireland he caused a third Irish cavalry corps to be raised out of loyal protestants who had fought at the Boyne. These, known for a long time as Cunningham's Dragoons, became ultimately the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars ; and so all of the regular Irish cavalry date from the Williamite wars in Ireland.

The Inniskilling infantry were originally Colonel Zachariah Tiffin's Regiment of Foot. As such, they fought at the Boyne and at Aughrim, and as such they went to the Low Countries in 1701 when Marlborough first took command. In Marlborough's army were also the 18th Royal Irish Regiment of Foot and Wynne's Dragoons, afterwards the 5th Royal Irish. The 6th Inniskilling Dragoons were kept for home service. Cunningham's Dragoons—afterwards the 8th Royal Irish Hussars—served in the Peninsula till 1714. Thus when the opening years of the eighteenth century saw the first epic struggle of the British army, that army drew from Ireland three regiments of dragoons and two of infantry—all five of them practically formed in the Irish wars, and all five recruited exclusively from Irish protestants. How far they were from representing the whole of Ireland can be illustrated by an episode from the history of the oldest corps among them.

The Royal Irish Regiment had been in the Low Countries from 1701 onwards ; they had fought at Ramillies, and not long after lost a hundred men and fifteen officers in one half-hour at the siege of Menin—so few miles from where two battalions of the regiment were fighting in 1917.

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They were at Oudenarde, and again in the bloodiest of all Marlborough's fights at Malplaquet. On that day of slaughter the British and Prussians were driving in the French left, when Marshal Villars called on a famous corps—the Irish Brigade of France. The Brigade, charging, pushed back the assailants, and the lines became terribly intermingled. Marlborough's generalship had a reserve in readiness, and he flung in his fresh troops, among whom were the Royal Irish. These, coming into the fight, met an enemy regiment which had driven right through the fight and was reforming from the confusion of its advance, when the Royal Irish with two volleys crushed it by sheer superiority of fire. It was the French Royal Regiment of Ireland.

Nor was this the only case. At Dettingen when George II., seeing the Irish Brigade charge against him, cursed “the laws which deprive me of such subjects”; and at Fontenoy when Lord Clare turned the battle from a British victory into a British repulse, the Inniskilling Dragoons were in the English army. Catholic Ireland and protestant Ireland fought on the same field but on opposite sides.

Neither the Royal Irish Foot nor the Inniskilling Foot were present at Dettingen or Fontenoy. Both, during the eighteenth century, were constantly in the West Indies or America. Both suffered grievously from yellow fever at Carthage; they were in the American wars against the French and took their part in the struggle at Ticonderoga. In 1762 the 18th were at Martinique, and the 27th fought all through the American War of Independence.

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But in truth the history of Irish regiments during the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century has little interest for Ireland. Ireland's part was then to find cash, not men. Great Britain, jealous of a standing army, cut down the British establishment to seven regiments; the government got round the difficulty by maintaining twelve on the Irish establishment, paid for by Ireland.¹ Yet in that period such was the fear and detestation of the Irish in the stronger country that Irishmen generally were kept out of the ranks. Even the Inniskillingers had Yorkshire assigned to them as their recruiting ground, "there being," says the "Dublin Journal" of 1755, "a Military Law, made without any Act of Parliament, that no Irishman whatever can be admitted into the Foot Service or other soldiery of Ireland as a common man."

This policy was altered in 1755, but only so far as Irish protestants were concerned. A warrant signified that augmentations in the several Irish battalions were to be made by "able-bodied protestants to be raised in the several counties of the Province of Ulster." Likewise, when in 1760 an Irish Regiment of Artillery (disbanded after the Union) was raised, it was necessary for every man joining to produce a certificate that he was a protestant and born of protestant parents. Up to 1784 advertisements for recruits in this corps insisted on the guarantee of protestantism. But long before this date there had been a great infiltration of Irish catholic recruits into the ranks of

¹ The 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, which was raised in England, got its title merely because of its long service on the Irish Establishment. It was never really an Irish regiment.

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the army generally, and, from 1770 onwards, their existence was informally and ungraciously recognised.

It was not until the wars of the French revolutionary period began that three more regiments were formed, which have been Irish since their origin in 1793. First of these was the 83rd Foot, raised in county Dublin, which later became linked with the 86th Foot; both are now the Royal Irish Rifles. The 86th had no very definite territorial associations, but ultimately in 1812 became the County Down Regiment. In the joint corps the Ulster tradition has prevailed, but the colours of the 83rd, displayed in St. Patrick's Cathedral, preserve a memory of its earlier association.

Next came the 87th, raised in the same year by Colonel Sir John Doyle. Linked with them in the Royal Irish Fusiliers is the 89th Foot, raised by Colonel Crosbie, which got the title of Princess Victoria's Regiment, because the presentation of new colours to it in 1833 was the first public duty performed by the destined Queen. But they are better known to Ireland by their title of the Faugh-a-ballaghs, which, of course, is the Irish for "out of the way."

Finally, there was raised, also in 1793, under Lord Clanricarde, the 88th Foot, which had from the first its title of the Connaught Rangers.

From this date onwards the Irish soldiery were a definite and formidable factor in the British line. In 1802 the recognition was made formal by the provision of chaplains and by the exemption of catholics from ordinary church parades.

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Yet a single incident needs to be recalled to indicate the relations in those years of Irish soldiers to Ireland. In 1798 the 5th Royal Irish Dragoons were in the country where rebellion had been stamped down but its spirit not killed. The regiment acquired a number of recruits at New Ross in Wexford, a place where the embers were hottest, and a plot was discovered, or alleged, to kill the officers. The Royal Irish Dragoons were recalled to Chatham and then disbanded; to mark King George's abhorrence, the figure 5 was left blank in the cavalry roll. Only in 1858 was it filled when the regiment was raised afresh, and raised in Ireland, as the 5th Royal Irish Lancers—a corps distinguished at Abu Klea and Elands-laagte, to name only two of many feats.

During the Rebellion of 1798 and after, while Ireland itself was being drawn into desperate and renewed revolt, the other Irish regiments were kept far afield. The closing years of the eighteenth century and the opening ones of the nineteenth found Irishmen fighting for England all the world over. The 18th Royal Irish were in the force which held Toulon for four months in 1793; Napoleon from the first days of his leadership found himself confronted by this fierce soldiery. He won at Toulon, but in the next year the Royal Irish captured his birthplace, Corsica; and in 1801 they were with Abercromby in Egypt and drove the Napoleonic troops out of that land which had so fascinated Napoleon's ambition.

The 27th Inniskillings, who had been in the Duke of York's miserable expedition to Walcheren, knew Abercromby earlier than the Royal Irish, for in 1796, in the

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West Indies, they distinguished themselves under his command at the capture of the island of St. Lucia. When the French stronghold there surrendered, by Abercromby's order the word of the day was "Inniskilling," and the countersign "Gilman"—their colonel's name. On that day Sir John Moore, as brigadier, had led and directed their gallantry. They followed Abercromby to Holland, and won with him in Egypt, and, like the 18th, wear on their colours "Egypt" and the Sphinx. They fought at Badajos, Salamanca, Vittoria, in the passes of the Pyrenees and beyond them at the Nivelle, at Orthes and Toulouse. They fought against Murat in Sicily, and at Maida in Calabria helped to rout a French force superior in number to themselves at a time when French prestige was at its zenith all over Europe. An odd little incident of this fight may be chronicled. Cole's brigade got leave to bathe after the action; a cloud of dust was sighted, and an officer spread the alarm of French cavalry charging. The alarm was false, the dust was occasioned by a herd of buffaloes; but long before any one could know what caused it, the Inniskillings were in line on the beach with muskets in their hands and ammunition belts on their bodies, but otherwise mother-naked.

The 83rd served in the West Indies and distinguished themselves at San Domingo, while the 86th was winning reputation in the East, first in Egypt, later in India. Men of both battalions were with Baird in 1806 when the Cape of Good Hope was captured from the Dutch.

The 87th were in the West Indies fighting at Santa Lucia, Dominique, Barbadoes and Jamaica; and they

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helped to capture La Valletta off Malta ; they also were with Abercromby in his Egyptian triumphs, and in the action when he fell. They were in South America at the storming of Monte Video and at the assault of Buenos Ayres, where the 1st Connaught Rangers were beside them.

This battalion of the Rangers, after being originally ordered to the West Indies, was driven back by storm to Gibraltar, and so their destination came to be altered to the East, whither their second battalion had been already sent, and at the storming of Seringapatam they won the first name which is emblazoned on the regimental colours. The first battalion was ordered from Bombay to form the vanguard of Baird's march from the Red Sea to the Nile, part of a famous converging movement in the Egyptian Campaign. Then came three years of coast defence in England, and then their venture at Buenos Ayres.

Thus in East and West Indies, in the north and south of Africa, in every continent, the Irish troops had proved their valour ; but the field in which they really created their special tradition was in Wellington's Peninsular Campaign. Inniskillings, Irish Fusiliers, Irish Rifles and Connaught Rangers, they plastered their flags over with names of famous fights. Only the Royal Irish were marooned away in the West Indies during these years.

One of the most picturesque individual exploits, in a war fertile of such incidents, occurred in the fight at Castella, when the 27th Inniskillings were awaiting the shock of a French Grenadier regiment. From the French ranks an officer stepped out and challenged any antagonist to single combat. Captain Waldron of the Inniskillings waited for

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no other signal, but charged, and with him, by a common impulse, went the Inniskillings, and drove their opponents in confusion down the hill slope.

The 86th were in India during these years and not idle ; they captured the Isle of Bombay. But the 83rd, who with them were forerunners of the present Royal Irish Rifles, were early in the Peninsula, and took part in 1809 in the capture of Oporto, and were at the passage of the Douro. Talavera was one of their great days, and then, like the Connaught Rangers, they were included in Picton's Fighting Third Division.

Picton did not think well of the Rangers at the opening of his command, and once called them in public "the Connaught Footpads." The feud lasted, and the regiment refused to subscribe to the plate which was presented to him by the Division when he left it. But they worked for him. At Badajos, where they formed the forlorn hope, Picton rode up to them : "Rangers of Connaught," he said, "it is not my intention to expend any powder this evening ; we will do this business with the cold iron"—and they did it. But the reputation for marauding which had been fixed on them never left them, and there is record of a corporal and a private who were sent out with two fine white bullocks and came back with two lean black ones.

"Begorra, the white beasts was lazy and we bate them till they was black," was their only explanation of the change.

They were sentenced to seven hundred and five hundred lashes apiece, after the manner of the time. But intercession was made, and for the sake of the bravery which

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their regiment had shown at Ciudad Rodrigo they got off.

At Busaco and again at Fuentes d'Onor, there were charges in which, as Napier has written, "the best soldiers of France gave way before the Connaught Rangers."

As for the Royal Irish Fusiliers, it was in the Peninsula that they got their name of the Faugh-a-ballaghs; at Barrosa they took a French eagle—the first that had been captured in that war.

If you took from the record of those wonderful campaigns the deeds and jests of the Irish regiments you would leave the story shorn of much that George Napier—half Irish by blood and wholly Irish by adoption—described in one compendious phrase as "fun and glory."

From Waterloo the Irish, as a whole, were absent; the Inniskillings had it all to themselves. The Dragoons were in the great charge with the Royals and Scots Greys; the 27th Foot had a harder ordeal. Standing in line in front of La Haye Sainte, they had to face continuous fire all day without change of ground, their only movement being to form square when French cavalry bursting from behind the farm buildings swept down on them. "It was lump and line, lump and line all day," said an officer. They lost terribly. But——

"That is the regiment," said the Duke of Wellington in later years, "which saved the centre of my line at Waterloo."

After that supreme day the two Inniskilling regiments, horse and foot, went each their own way, and did not meet for nearly sixty years. It was in 1873, when the 27th were lying at the Curragh and the 6th Dragoons were to arrive.

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Military etiquette ordains that cavalry shall play cavalry, and infantry infantry into barracks. But for such an occasion etiquette had to be modified, and the 4th Dragoon Guards, who were also there, consented that the 6th Inniskillings should be led into their cantonment through the lines of the 27th, and that in their passage the Dragoon bands should give way. So accordingly, as the Inniskilling Horse entered between the Inniskilling Foot drawn up in two ranks, the band of the Foot played at their head "Inniskillings 'round the Globe." Two years later a joint party of the two regiments marched through Inniskillen itself, where they had not come in together since the days when Echlin's Horse and Tiffin's Foot returned from taking Belturbet and Cavan. No doubt that, for such a day, even in a town so deeply divided by historic memories as is Enniskillen, the whole populace crowded to a common welcome and rejoicing.

It is unnecessary to follow out carefully the record of Irish regiments through the scattered wars of Queen Victoria's reign. That of the Royal Irish is typical. They were in the Chinese Campaign of 1840, then in Burmah, where the name "Pegu" was added to their colours, and then came a sterner struggle against equal foes. In the Crimea they lost three hundred and sixty-nine of all ranks killed and wounded, and they added "Sevastopol" to their record. In this campaign Captain Thomas Esmond won the first Victoria Cross in the regiment's history for gallantry at the Redan. A second was earned by Captain Shaw in a very different campaign, against the stockaded "pahs" of the Maoris. The 18th were not in the Indian Mutiny,

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but in 1879 took their part in the Afghan War. In Egypt they shared in Wolseley's victory of 1882 at Tel-el-Kebir, and two years later were in the Nile Expedition which—through no fault of the soldiers—failed to rescue Gordon. Then it was the Indian North-West frontier again for them; the Black Mountain Campaign in 1888 and the Tirah Valley fighting in 1897. About the same time a mounted infantry detachment of the first battalion was operating against revolted natives in Rhodesia. Where had they not bled and battled in those sixty years of a peaceful reign?

The record of the Inniskillings is less combatant for that half-century. They were not in the Crimea and not heavily engaged during the Mutiny, though much hard fighting was done by the 3rd Madras European Regiment, the 108th Foot of the Company's troops, which in 1881 was linked to the 27th as a second battalion. "Central India" on the regimental colours of the Inniskillings comes from the 108th's inheritance of fame.

The 83rd County of Dublin Regiment and the 86th County Down, linked battalions, fought also in Central India through the Mutiny. The 86th escalated the wall at the capture of Jhansi, and were in the storming of Gwalior. In 1881 the two were formed into one regiment as the Royal Irish Rifles, the 83rd being then in South Africa engaged in the unlucky campaign which led to Majuba.

The Royal Irish Fusiliers during the Queen's reign fought in Canada, in India against the Mahrattas, in Burmah, where they gained the name of "Ava" for their

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colours, and in the Crimea, when they added "Sevastopol" to their honours. They were in the Indian Mutiny; they were in Egypt, at Tel-el-Kebir, at El-Teb, where they helped to hold the square; and again at Tamai. They furnished detachments to the Ashanti Campaign of 1895, to the Rhodesian Expedition in 1896 and to the Battle of Omdurman in 1898.

The Connaught Rangers, who, before the Crimean War, had been in the Ionian Islands, in the West Indies and North America without much chance of fighting, got their fill of it between 1854 and 1856. They carry "Alma" and "Inkerman" as well as "Sevastopol" on their colours, and from the savage winters of the Crimea they were sent to sweltering India to cope with the Mutiny, and they added "India" to their roll of fame. In 1877-8 they were in the Kaffir War, where Major H. Garret Moore won the first Victoria Cross for the regiment by going back into a crowd of stabbing assagais to fetch out a wounded man. In 1879 two more of these coveted distinctions were won by two privates in the fighting against Sekukuni's Zulus.

At the close of 1880 the second battalion of the Rangers—which was then the 94th Regiment, with a Scotch tradition and curious history, going back to the days when there was a Scotch brigade in the service of Holland—was the sufferer by one of the encounters which left an evil mark on the relations between Boer and Briton. War had not been declared, and the 94th's headquarters with two companies were marching from Lydenburg to Pretoria, when they were ambushed at Bronkhorst Spruit by a body of

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Boers who fired on them unexpectedly. This detachment was all either killed or captured, but isolated garrisons from the Rangers held out unconquered through the war which followed, and two more Victoria Crosses were won for gallant rescues under fire.

Another Irish regiment, the 100th Foot, now the Leinsters, has had an interrupted existence. Raised in 1760, disbanded, raised again in 1780, disbanded, raised once more in 1805, its service was chiefly associated with the American War of 1813, and the first name on its colours is "Niagara." Disbanded in 1818, the regiment was raised, this time to enduring life, in 1858, very largely from Canadians, and in addition to the Prince of Wales's plume they wear the maple leaf as a distinctive badge. The second battalion, the 109th Foot, was raised in 1853, and greatly distinguished itself in Central India during the Mutiny. In 1881 these two battalions were linked as the Leinster Regiment under a scheme which finally constituted the regular Irish territorial regiments as we know them to-day.

That territorial basis is indicated roughly by their militia attachments, and shall be here set down, for, roughly and generally, it gives an idea of the composition of each corps.

The Royal Irish have their depot at Clonmel and have the Wexford, North Tipperary and Kilkenny Militias for reserve units.

The Inniskilling Fusiliers have their depot at Omagh, and the Fermanagh, Tyrone and Donegal Militias are their militia battalions.

The Royal Irish Rifles, with headquarters in Belfast,

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have four militia battalions—the North Down, Antrim, South Down and Louth.

The Royal Irish Fusiliers, with depot at Armagh, have three militia battalions—Armagh, Cavan and Monaghan.

The Connaught Rangers' depot is at Galway; to them are attached the South Mayo and North Mayo Militias combined, the Galway Militia and the Rosecommon Militia.

The Leinsters have their district headquarters at Birr, and the King's County, Queen's County and Royal Meath Militias make their three attached battalions.

There remain to be accounted for two most illustrious Irish regiments, of which I have as yet said nothing. These are the Royal Munster Fusiliers with headquarters at Tralee, and the South Cork, Kerry and Limerick County Militias attached; and the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, with depot at Naas, and the Kildare, Royal Dublin City Militia and Dublin County Militia making their third, fourth and fifth battalions.

These two Irish regiments—and none could possibly be more Irish—have their definitely Irish character only since 1881. The Munsters represent what were formerly the 101st and 104th regiments of the Company's army. The 101st grew from a guard of thirty men under an Ensign whom the Company fetched out in 1652; it was not formed into the Bengal European battalion till 1756, when it became a mainstay of Clive's amazing successes. But of that old history, which was no more Irish than anything else, I recall only a name that stuck. In the Mutiny Campaign of 1857–8 the Bengal Fusiliers won six Victoria Crosses, and also their nickname of Dirty Shirts, for they

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went into action in their shirt-sleeves and came out "*non indecoro pulvere sordidi*"—stained with glorious battle dust. That is why the Munsters are the "Dirty Shirts" to-day.

The regiment's first term of home service began in 1869, and its territorial connection with Munster—having Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Clare assigned for its recruiting ground—dates from 1873. Its first service as an Irish regiment was in Indian climes; it was employed in Burmah from 1885–7.

Just in the same way the Dublins inherit the fame of two famous European corps in the Company's service—the Madras and the Bombay Fusiliers, ranked as 102nd and 103rd of the British Line. They too take over a nickname. In the Mutiny, when they were fighting their way to Lucknow, a despatch from Nana Sahib was intercepted, which spoke of "those blue-capped soldiers that fight like devils." And at Lucknow when debate arose as to who could carry the bridge of Char Bagh, raked by four guns, and flanked by four more, "My Blue-caps," said Havelock, and they carried it.

All the story of the Dublins as the Dublins begins with that South African War in the midst of which this century opened stormily. I have kept this record for separate treatment, because in it the position of Irish troops assumed a new phase.

The war brought to England at the outset a series of stinging reverses, which, coming on a mood of arrogant self-confidence, bred something like dismay. For the first time in most men's memory England felt herself in need of

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help, and Ireland as a whole was in no humour to give it, for Ireland, like the rest of Europe, sided with the Boers. Irishmen from Ireland and from America formed a new Irish Brigade to oppose the English. Against this background the conduct of the Irish troops stood out with dramatic contrast.

All of them were in it—horse and foot. The 5th Royal Irish Lancers, the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars, all were there—the 5th Lancers prominent in the early days of Elandslaagte. But it was on the infantry that the stress fell.

At the first encounter of the war, in the advance on Talana Hill whence the Boers had fired the opening cannon shots, the Dublin Fusiliers made the first line of the attack, the Royal Irish Fusiliers the third. Splendid troops, courageous officers, under an incompetent higher command, they carried their objective with a murderous loss, and achieved nothing but the repute of valour. From Talana Hill they fell back on Ladysmith, where a few days later the battalion of the Irish Fusiliers was sacrificed at Nicholson's Nek.

In Buller's main advance to relieve Ladysmith, there was formed an explicitly Irish Brigade—the Fifth—under Fitzroy Hart. The 1st Inniskillings, 1st Connaught Rangers, 2nd Dublin Fusiliers were in it, and it should have been made up by the 2nd Royal Irish Rifles, but these had been already flung away at Stormberg under the unlucky Gatacre, and the Border Regiment took their place. A fourth Irish battalion, the 2nd Irish Fusiliers, was, however, in the force—part of Barton's Sixth Brigade.

The Irish Brigade went bravely to disaster. At Colenso

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the Dublins once more led, the Rangers following. Against an unrecognised position, crossing open ground in front of concealed rifle fire, they were held up and bravery was of no avail.

In January, when the turning movement upon Spion Kop was launched, serious work opened at what came to be called Hart's Hill. "Again as at Colenso," says Sir A. Conan Doyle, "the brunt of the fighting fell upon Hart's Irish Brigade, who upheld that immemorial tradition of valour with which that name, either in or out of the British service, has invariably been associated." Once more the Irish carried their immediate objective, and the main purpose of the attack once more failed.

And yet again, when the final attempt was made at Pieters' Hill, Hart's Brigade was told off for the task. Inniskillings, Dublins and Rangers, they rushed the first trench and were driven back from the second, but held their ground half-way and pinned the Boers there for two days while the rest of the attack swung back, changed direction and came in on the other flank. So the issue was decided. When the relieving troops entered Ladysmith on March 3rd pride of place was given to the five officers and handful of men who were left of the 1st Dublins; they led the way into the town.

These were the things that stirred England. On St. Patrick's Day of 1900 shamrock was costly in London streets. In April, 1900, an Army Order appeared, ordering that there should be raised a regiment of Irish Guards "to commemorate the bravery shown by the Irish regiments in South Africa."

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Thus came the list of distinctively Irish regiments in the regular army to be completed, at a moment when the popularity of Irish troops stood higher than ever before in England, and when the cause for which they fought was more unpopular in Ireland than any cause for which Irish troops in British service had ever drawn the sword. Nothing could be more typical of the peculiar and unhappy relation in which the Irish soldier has found himself placed. There was always a bitterness in the pride which Ireland could not but feel in the record of their deeds. Her children they were, not her soldiers, not her citizens.

It is needless to follow further the record of Irish regiments in the South African War, which in its day seemed so great an enterprise. In the European struggle, which dwarfed it, Irish regiments and Irish soldiers were to assume for a time at least a new character in relation to Ireland.

Yet it would be easy by following individual histories to link up the two wars. A single instance may illustrate. In the advance across the Tugela a sergeant of the Dublins won the Medal for Distinguished Conduct. In 1914 he was a man well over forty, with his service completed, but he volunteered at once and was made sergeant-major of one of the new "Service" battalions of his regiment. He had a great hand in training not only that battalion, but all the officers of the 47th and 48th Brigades in the divisional training courses at Buttevant. He went out to France in December, 1915, a non-commissioned officer, and he became within some eighteen months a major, in the acting rank of lieutenant-colonel, commanding the battalion in which he

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had won—and earned to the uttermost—his rapid advance. There were perhaps not many like him ; there are not many like him in any army. But the Irish “ Service ” battalions owed not a little to the lessons which Irish soldiers had learnt in 1899 to 1902.

In 1914, when the war cloud rolled up, it would be foolish to ignore that the events of the month of March at the Curragh, and, still more sharply, those of July in Dublin, had rendered the British army extremely unpopular in Ireland. Then came August 4th and Mr. Redmond's speech, in which, speaking for Ireland, he adopted the Allied cause and promised a full measure of assistance. The effect was instantaneous. Troops in Dublin, which had been confined to barracks lest the mere sight of them should rouse a riot, were cheered on the way to the boat which would carry them towards Flanders. Irish soldiers were everywhere lionised and idolised. All the talk of civil war which had been so rife dropped. Ulster offered to raise a division from her volunteers, and the offer was promptly accepted. Nationalist Ireland through its leaders offered to do the same, and this offer also was accepted, though after ungracious and hindering delays. But in the meantime another Irish division, with no political colour or complexion, was in process of being raised.

Thus, to the Great War of 1914–18 Ireland sent first of all the battalions of Irish Guards, the two regular battalions of each of her seven regiments, the Royal Irish Regiment, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Royal Irish Rifles, Princess Victoria's Royal Irish Fusiliers, Connaught Rangers, Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment, Royal Munster Fusiliers and

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Royal Dublin Fusiliers—behind which were the various militias. She sent also the Tenth (Irish) Division, raised and trained under Lieutenant-General Sir Bryan Mahon, K.C.V.O., D.S.O., which left England for the Mediterranean in June, 1915 ; the Twenty-sixth Ulster Division, raised and trained under Lieutenant-General Sir C. B. Powell, K.C.B., which left for France in September, 1915, under the command of Lieutenant-General Oliver Nugent, C.B., D.S.O., and the Sixteenth (Irish) Division, raised and trained under Lieutenant-General Sir L. W. Parsons, K.C.B., which left for France in December, 1915, under Major-General Sir W. B. Hickie, K.C.B.

In addition, Ireland's three regiments of regular cavalry, the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, the 6th Royal Inniskilling Dragoons and the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars, all had their share of the work ; so too had the two regiments of Irish Yeomanry, the North and South Irish Horse. Cavalrymen, they did infantrymen's work in the trenches time and again.

To follow out in any detail the part which Irish infantry regiments played in the war would be almost impossible. But we may trace first the element they contributed to the original expeditionary force, on whom fell the most desperate, most varied and most critical ordeal of all, and whose achievements could have been only possible to men physically superb, perfectly trained, and having consummate bravery.

In the First Division were the 1st Munster Fusiliers ; in the Second, the 2nd Connaught Rangers and the 1st Irish Guards, who appear to have opened the ball at Mons ;

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in the Third, the 2nd Royal Irish Regiment and 2nd Royal Irish Rifles. All these were in the opening battle on August 22nd, 1914.

In the Fourth Division were the 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers, the 2nd Dublins, and 2nd Inniskillings. The 5th Lancers, the Inniskilling Dragoons and troops of the North and South Irish Horse were also with the expedition, and had their work cut out for them in covering the rear during the retreat from Mons towards Paris. In September, after the tide had turned, during the battle of the Aisne, the 2nd Leinsters came into action with the Sixth Division. The 1st Irish Rifles came out with the Eighth Division, but not till after the first battle of Ypres; and the Indian Brigade, which included the 1st Connaught Rangers, were in the fighting from the middle of October onwards.

It is almost ungracious to try and select special incidents, but the attempt shall be made. The 2nd Irish Rifles were very heavily engaged at Mons. At Le Cateau the 2nd Inniskillings and 1st Irish Fusiliers were conspicuous for gallantry. In the retreat from this unlucky place the 2nd Munsters, left in rear to cover the movement, failed to receive an order bidding them retire "at once" till it was too late to get away. Cut off on the march, they stood against overwhelming numbers till their major and eight other officers had been killed, and more than half the battalion were down. The Irish Guards were almost as unfortunate at Villars-Cotteret when their colonel, George Morris, a Galway man much beloved, was killed. But Irish regiments die hard and grow again quickly. Lord Cavan, commanding the Guards' Brigade, wrote to Colonel

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Proby of the 1st Irish Guards after the first battle of Ypres :

“ I want you to convey to every man in that battalion that I consider that the safety of the right flank of the British position depended entirely on their staunchness on that disastrous day, November 1st. Those of them that are left have made history, and I can never thank them enough for the way in which they recovered themselves and showed the enemy that Irish Guards must be reckoned with, however hard hit.”

On December 26th the 2nd Munsters had recovered also, and were sent to the almost hopeless task of retaking certain lost trenches at Givenchy. They retook them, through abysmal mud, in black darkness, and hung on against counter-attacks, so far ahead of the line that all touch was lost and only the skill and courage of another Munster officer succeeded in discovering where they were and extricating what was left of them.

Only too many of the tales have a similar ending. For example, the 2nd Royal Irish charged over eight hundred yards of clear ground and took Le Pilly, but only to be cut off in it.

I do not attempt to detail cases of individual gallantry. Corporal—afterwards Lieutenant—Michael O’Leary’s action at the Brickstacks, which won their first Victoria Cross for the Irish Guards, was only a type of hundreds. Attention must be turned to the deeds of Irish regulars in a different field.

When Sir Ian Hamilton’s force undertook its attempt on the Gallipoli Peninsula he had one division only of regulars, the illustrious Twenty-ninth. In it were comprised the 1st

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Munsters, 1st Dublins and 1st Inniskillings. The Munsters and Dublins, along with two companies of the 1st Hampshires, were told off for the landing at V Beach which, as the "Times History" says, was recognised as "going to be the toughest task of all." At what a cost the landing from the "River Clyde" succeeded need not be called to mind. Munsters, Dublins and blue-jackets died in heaps. Admiral de Robeck wrote in his despatch: "The capture of this beach called for a display of the utmost gallantry and perseverance from the officers and men of both services; that they successfully accomplished their task bordered on the miraculous."¹

At the second phase in the Gallipoli Campaign, when Sir Ian Hamilton attempted by means of great reinforcements to push across the narrow neck which separated him from the Straits, Ireland had a poignant interest in the venture. The Tenth Division, first of the three which had been raised in Ireland by men volunteering expressly for this war, here first came into action—but not under lucky auspices. It had come out under the command of Sir Bryan Mahon who trained it, and the troops naturally hoped to operate as a unit under his orders. But military agreements decreed otherwise. For the great attack timed to take place on August 7th, one of its brigades was detached and sent to support the Australians and New Zealanders at Anzac. Better company could not be found to fight in, and the 5th Connaught Rangers and 6th Leinsters (for in-

¹ It was no fault of Admiral de Robeck that by the excision of a schedule from his despatch those who read could not know what troops had here fought and died so gloriously.

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stance) there gave a good account of themselves. But it lessened the chance of Ireland's making a name for herself with this first outcome of the new spirit, and what happened at Suvla Bay emphasised the disappointment. Here Sir Bryan Mahon should have had two brigades, the 30th and 31st, under his command, but the landing on an unsurveyed beach presented unforeseen difficulties, and five out of the eight battalions were ordered to land on the right instead of on the left and to come under the command of the general commanding the Eleventh Division. By him they were placed at the disposal of a brigadier who immediately after the action was relieved of his command. As a Division, the Tenth Division never got a chance on Gallipoli to show what it could do. Yet even as it was, Irish troops seized and held the Kiretech Tepe ridge on the left; and on the right where the only success was the capture of what came to be called Chocolate Hill, Irish troops were certainly the majority of those engaged when it was captured, and Irish troops remained holding it that night when all others were withdrawn to the beach.

Here fell a terrible proportion out of what was known as the "Pals Battalion"—the 7th Dublins—with its "D" Company consisting largely of men well known in the football field—the very pick of Ireland.

In September, when the belated attempt to relieve Serbia was set on foot, the Tenth Irish Division were drawn together from the Peninsula and dispatched to Salonica. When overwhelming forces of Bulgarians forced back the allied line across the Greek frontier, Irish troops were holding the extreme right and supporting the main weight of

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the attack. In khaki drill, ill-elad, ill-rationed owing to the difficulty of communications, they endured the hardships of a Macedonian winter, with ice eight inches thick on the trodden paths ; they lost terribly from frost-bite ; they were outnumbered and out-gunned, even their eartridges ran short ; but they held up the attack and ensured, at terrible cost to themselves, safe withdrawal. It may be doubted whether troops had at any time in this war a harder ordeal to go through.

Next in order comes the career of the other two Irish "Service" divisions in France. The Ulstermen were first in the field by some three months. Trained in the north of Ireland, some at Finner Camp in County Donegal and some at Ballykinder, near Belfast, they consisted entirely of new battalions of two regiments, the Royal Irish Rifles and the Inniskilling Fusiliers. Belfast and its district made chiefly for the Rifles ; Derry, Fermanagh and Donegal for the "Skins." They went out in September, 1915, and were, during the winter and early summer, far south on the British line. When the great battle of the Somme opened they were in it, and the date had a special significance for them, since it was July 1st. They went over bedecked with orange, and reached the farthest limit of their objective, carrying five lines of trenches including what was afterwards famous as the Schwaben Redoubt. But unhappily their success was not shared by the divisions right and left of them ; the position which they had reached became untenable owing to the flanking fire from Thiepval, and they were recalled, having to pass a second time—but in how different a spirit—through a hell of machine-gun

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fire. In the whole war it may be doubted whether any division was more magnificently successful or more cruelly handled by fate. What they won that day in six hours was not retaken till after more than six months of desperate warfare.

The Sixteenth Irish Division, trained at Fermoy, Buttevant and Tipperary, went to France in December, 1915, and remained till August, 1916, on the troubled front between Loos and the Hohenzollern Redoubt. It suffered a good deal more during this period of simply holding the line than did the Ulstermen in their corresponding experience; in April, 1916, two gas attacks, with a new and deadly concentration of poison, caused terrible and unforgettable casualties. But the higher ranks of the division were on the whole little changed when in August they left the neighbourhood of Bethune and Nœux-les-Mines to move southwards. On September 4th they were in the battle, though only with one brigade. The 47th Brigade carried Guillemont and its quarries, a triumphant piece of work. Ten days later they took part with the whole division in an assault on the village of Ginchy, which had previously repulsed many attacks, but now fell to the Irish onslaught. It was in these days that the "Times" recognised that as "missile troops" the Irish had at all events no superiors.

The Sixteenth Division had been luckier than the Thirty-Sixth, for its gains had been held, and its losses in a fortnight's fighting had been less than the Ulstermen suffered in one day. Taking the whole casualties, however, for the period they had been together in France, there was little to choose, and in reputation neither had any

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cause to think themselves better than the other, and both had every right to believe that Ireland's glory had lost nothing in their keeping.

Probably it was felt in high quarters that they were likely to be even more formidable united, or in rivalry, than apart, and early autumn found them side by side, shoulder to shoulder, in the trenches opposite the Wytschaete ridge. From October to June the Sixteenth Division, having the Ulstermen on their right, lay there behind breastworks, some of which had been thrown up hastily when the British advance northwards was pushed back towards the end of 1914. There were men in the Connaught Rangers who had been through Messines and beyond in those earlier days, and who came back in 1916 to ground over which they had fought before this part of the line had settled down into trench warfare.

In June came at last the day which had been long waited for, when the two Irish divisions could go over abreast. This time for once luck was with them. Nothing cleaner or completer has been done in the whole war, and within a few hours the whole ridge from Wytschaete to Messines was in the possession of the allies, Irish regiments having captured the whole centre of the line. The casualties were hardly more than would have been incurred in a bad tour of ordinary trench work.

One tragic event saddened yet enhanced the splendour of that action. When Major Willie Redmond got his death-wound at Wytschaete, Ulster stretcher-bearers carried him off the field, and this simple fact touched many hearts with something more than compassion—with a feeling of

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new sympathy and comradeship. And the Ulstermen drove home the moral by raising among all ranks a very generous gift from the whole division to the memorial fund raised to commemorate this most chivalrous and gallant of Nationalist Irishmen.

The Irish divisions paid for their luck later on, when once more side by side they advanced to the attack, this time north-east of Ypres on July 31st. Rain came down obliterating everything, destroying preparations, and did not cease for days. There was a terrible fortnight through which the two divisions held a fiercely contested stretch of line under concentrated shell fire, and in the worst weather conditions, and at the close advanced once more to the attack against the new German scheme of dotted and concealed machine-gun posts in shell-holes instead of the regular and recognisable trench lines. The bravery which had glorified their triumph at Messines now had to face a sterner test, and by the witness of those who wrote from the spot it was never more conspicuous.

But the fighting for the Passchendaele ridge took dreadful toll of Irish troops, and within the month after the third battle of Ypres came to its conclusion, four of the service battalions ceased to exist as separate units, their survivors being amalgamated with other battalions. After the Easter of 1916, there had been a grievous slackening in the supply of Irish recruits. The shortage was felt by Ulster battalions as well as by the rest.

In November, 1917, when the short-lived success at Cambrai was achieved, both the Sixteenth and the Ulster divisions were in the attacking line, though not together, and

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both earned new honours. Then came the winter of preparation for the foreseen desperate onslaught of German armies, possessing a great superiority in numbers. All the world knows how it was decided that since the entire line could not be held in sufficient strength, that part should be weakened where a break through would be least disastrous. This section was entrusted to General Gough's army—the Fifth—in which were included both Irish divisions; both were swamped in the cataclysm of March, 1918. The army commander held that their dogged resistance gained the time which made it possible for French divisions coming up to stem the German onrush. But those days really ended the existence of the Sixteenth Division as a separate and Irish fighting unit.

The Ulster Division was again made up to strength—remnants of the Sixteenth contributing largely—and it fought gallantly through the rest of the war in France. But in its history, as in that of the Sixteenth Division, two great moments stood out—the day when it first attacked, singly, on the Somme—and the day when jointly with the Sixteenth it carried the Wytsehaete ridge.

The Tenth Irish Division remained on the Salonica front for a considerable time after its hard experience in the end of 1915. Then it was moved to Egypt, having suffered, like all troops in the Balkans, from wastage by disease. In Egypt the division was reconstituted for a new campaign. It remained Irish in the sense that one Irish battalion made the nucleus of European fighting power in each brigade—the other three-fourths of the whole being Indian. So constituted, it went under Allenby to Palestine. The 1st

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Royal Irish, 2nd Royal Irish Fusiliers and 2nd Leinsters were among the troops which captured Jerusalem and gained the first decisive success which pointed to the final triumph of the Allies. The 1st Connaught Rangers were also in this army, but with another division.

Of the nine other battalions from the Tenth Division one or two were disbanded, the rest brought back to France. Five of them were attached to the Sixty-sixth Division—the 6th Dublins and the 5th Inniskillings, 5th Royal Irish Fusiliers, 5th Connaught Rangers and 5th Leinsters. The 6th Inniskillings went to the Fiftieth Division, to which the 2nd Dublins and 2nd Leinsters had been transferred from the Sixteenth. The 1st Dublins, who had also been with the Sixteenth, returned to their original companionship in the Twenty-ninth Division with which they had earned such tragic glory on V Beach. The 2nd Leinsters were also in the Twenty-ninth; the 1st Leinsters were with the Fifty-ninth; the 2nd Royal Irish Regiment with the Sixty-third; the 8th Royal Irish Regiment and 13th Inniskillings with the Fortieth Division. Thus in despatches of many of the last and hardest fought actions of the war, names of Irish regiments cropped up: the last Gazette of 1918 had two Victoria Crosses won by men in the 2nd Leinsters.

Thus it will be seen that up to the end of the war the Ulster Division remained in the line as an Irish division; the Tenth, in so far as it was European, was Irish; the Sixteenth Irish had become a training cadre; but there were along with other fighting divisions some fourteen Irish battalions—more than the strength of another division—

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and over and above this there were the two battalions of the superb Irish Guards.

From the first days at Mons to the last at Mons again Irish regiments were in the fray wherever it was fiercest ; on the Somme, on the Struma, on the Jordan, on the Euphrates, and on the beaches of Gallipoli where nothing flowed but blood, they won glory. “*Semper et ubique fideles*” was the motto of the old Irish brigade in the service of France ; it has been proved true of Irish soldiers throughout the whole British army to-day.

I have written only of the explicitly Irish regiments. Over and above them must be remembered the brigade of Tyneside Irish whom the army knows officially as Northumberland Fusiliers ; the Liverpool Irish ; the London Irish, whose shamrock badges were so far to the front in the battle of Loos ; and that unclassified, unrecognised multitude of Irish soldiers who by choice or chance have found their way into artillery, engineers, or English, Scottish and Welsh regiments. Up to December, 1915, fourteen Irishmen had won the V.C. in this war ; of these only five were in Irish corps.

In the whole war twenty-eight Victoria Crosses were awarded to officers or men of Irish regiments, in some few cases gained with tanks, or Flying Corps, but generally with Irish units. One at least also was gained with an Irish unit—the 1st Inniskillings—by an officer of an English regiment, but bearing an Irish name—Colonel Sherwood Kelly.

The total roll of voluntary enlistments in the Great War showed that there joined in Ireland itself more than half as many men again as Wellington had in his army at

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Waterloo. But I do not care to dwell on figures. The most certain fact is that with wiser handling—with reasonable fair-play—Ireland's contribution of volunteers might have been hugely increased, and the relation of Irish soldiers to Ireland might have been throughout what it was up to April, 1916.

For the first time in history Irish soldiers came forward in this war to serve for England with full conviction of a civic duty—of a duty to civilisation and to Ireland as a trustee of civilisation. That conviction was shared, broadly speaking, by Ireland at large, until it was shaken by a doubt whether the ideals for which Irish soldiers had gone out were meant to apply in Ireland. Once more the old unhappy estrangement between Ireland and Irish troops reappeared. The Irish soldiers, in so far as they were Nationalist, found themselves in great measure cut off from the moral support which a country gives to its citizens in arms.

On St. Patrick's Day of 1916 the Sixteenth Division lay opposite the most conspicuous feature of all the British line—the one survivor of what had been twin pylons, the "Tower Bridge" erection at Loos. Day and night that was a ranging mark for German shell; shrapnel and high explosive screamed and burst about it, machine-gun fire swept it in search for some sniper's post. But on St. Patrick's morning the German gunners had something new to shoot at—a square of green flag run up there in the moonlight by some bold climber from the Munsters. That flag then certainly spoke for Ireland; its challenge would have been cheered from Cork to Donegal.

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A year later that would not have been true—still less in March, 1918, when the Irish divisions were almost swept out of existence by the overmastering German onrush. And when the time came to rejoice over the war's ending, was there ever anything more tragic than the position of the men who had gone out by thousands for the sake of Ireland to confront the greatest military power ever known in history, who had fought the war and won the war, and who now looked at their friends and at each other with doubtful eyes?

All that can be said is to quote the words used by Mr. John Redmond when, in October, 1917, a vote of thanks was proposed from the House of Commons to the Navy, the Army and the Mercantile Marine. Dwelling specially on those Irish troops whose action had been repudiated by a "section at any rate, of their countrymen," and to whose hearts there had been brought, "in the midst of their other trials, privations and sufferings, a new and poignant feeling of anguish," he said:

"I wish it were possible for me to speak to every one of those men. If my words could reach them, I would say to every one of them that they need have no misgiving, that they were right from the first, that time will vindicate them, that time will show that while fighting for civilisation and liberty in Europe they were also fighting for civilisation and liberty in their own land."

STEPHEN L. GWYNN.

IRISH MILITARY AND NAVAL
LEADERS

IRISH MILITARY AND NAVAL LEADERS

FIELD-MARSHAL LORD KITCHENER, one of the most remarkable personalities of his age, or any age, was born at Gunsborough House, near Listowel, County Kerry, on June 24th, 1850. He was commissioned second lieutenant, Royal Engineers, in 1871. As a subaltern he was employed in survey work in Cyprus and Palestine, and on promotion to captain in 1883 was attached to the Egyptian Army.

In 1884 he served on the staff of the British Expeditionary Force on the Nile, and was promoted successively major and lieutenant-colonel by brevet for his services. From 1886 to 1888 he was Commandant at Suakim. He served as Adjutant-General of the Army from 1889 to 1892, when he succeeded Sir Francis, afterwards Lord, Grenfell as Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, and completed the reorganisation of the forces of the Khedive.

In 1896 he became a British major-general. He commanded the united force of British and Egyptian troops which destroyed the Mahdi's power, and after the victory of Omdurman in 1898 he was raised to the Peerage as Baron Kitchener of Khartoum, and received the thanks of Parliament and a grant of £30,000.

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It was after the battle of Omdurman that Sir H. Kitchener found Major Marchand and a French force at Fashoda, on the White Nile. In his handling of the delicate situation thus created the Sirdar showed signal ability. Early in 1899 he was appointed Governor-General of the Sudan.

In the autumn the Boer War broke out, and after the "Black Week" Lord Roberts was appointed Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, with Lord Kitchener as Chief of the Staff. In 1900, when Lord Roberts returned to England he succeeded to the position of Commander-in-Chief.

In the negotiations culminating in the Peace of Vereeniging he again gave proof of his diplomatic ability. He was advanced to the substantive rank of general "for distinguished service," and received the thanks of Parliament and a grant of £50,000.

Lord Kitchener then went to India as Commander-in-Chief, and his seven years' work there included the reform and reorganisation of the British and native forces. In 1909 he was promoted field-marshal and succeeded the Duke of Connaught as Commander-in-Chief and High Commissioner in the Mediterranean.

After inspecting the forces of the Empire, and assisting the Dominions to draw up schemes of defence, he declined to take up the Mediterranean command.

In June, 1914, Kitchener took a holiday, and was in England during the weeks that saw the murders at Sarajevo and the startling development of the pan-European war that every one believed in and no one expected. He took no part in the internal agitation that was ended by the



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| 1. EARL ROBERTS. | 2. FIELD-MARSHAL EARL KITCHENER. | 3. VISCOUNT FRENCH. |
| 4. ADMIRAL EARL BEATTY. | 5. MAJ. WILLIE REDMOND, M.P. | 6. LT.-GEN. SIR BRYAN THOMAS MAHON. |
| 7. LT.-GEN. SIR FREDK. STANLEY MAUDE. | 8. LT.-GEN. SIR HENRY WILSON. | 9. LT.-GEN. SIR HERBERT DE LE POER GOUGH. |

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declaration of war against Germany on the night of August 4th. He was actually at Dover, waiting for the Channel boat to start for Egypt, when a message arrived, asking him to accept the position of Secretary of State for War.

Kitchener immediately returned to London, and took over the gigantic task of turning civilian England into a country ready to meet on land the utmost that a bitter enemy could launch against these shores, and ready also to lend to the help of France that aid which when the books of war are closed for ever will be held to be the greatest reinforcement that ever a race or kingdom has received. The first six divisions were ready, and they left with amazing rapidity and in silence. Von Kluck, the German commander immediately against our troops, admitted two things. One was that he never expected to find the British Army in front of him; the second was that the stalwart, unfailing, cheerful, savage resistance of the English was the cause of his repulse.

Lord Kitchener was a genius in administration, and a soldier of the age of scientific and machine-made war. He did not consider the mere comfort of his men. Each unit he looked upon as part of a vast machine, which must not stop until he gave the order. He was the guide and goad of a reluctant Ministry. For them he cared as little as he cared for the other men of greater intellect than character whom he had met in his varied life. Perfectly certain that the nation would support him whatever he did, he took the situation at a glance, and arranged his forces as he deemed best. The rule was iron.

On June 5th, 1916, he sailed from a Scottish port on a

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military mission to Russia. The cruiser is reported to have struck a mine. Kitchener went down with all on board except a few of the crew.

Field-Marshal Lord Roberts was the son of the late General Sir Abraham Roberts, G.C.B., and Nora Henrietta, daughter of Major A. Bunbury, of Kilfeacle, County Tipperary.

As a Staff Officer for twenty-two years in the Quarter-master-General's Department, India, he saw active service in the Mutiny at the siege and capture of Delhi, in the relief of Lucknow in November, 1857, and in the siege and capture of Lucknow in March, 1858, and in the Umbeyla Expedition of 1867 he had his first experience of warfare with the wild frontier tribesmen. Four years later he superintended the embarkation of the Bengal Division for the Abyssinian Campaign.

When the Afghan War of 1878-81 broke out he was, therefore, fully equipped for the command of the Kurram Field Force, and in the following year, after the murder of Cavagnari, the British Envoy, he made his famous march to Kabul with a force of a little over six thousand fighting men, and entered the capital as victor in the short space of nine days. Largely owing to his skill and foresight the British troops were able to hold their own against the savage Afghan attacks that followed in the winter.

One of Lord Roberts' achievements as Commander-in-Chief in India was his organisation of the Burmah Expedition of 1885-6, and his pacification of the country. The part he took in retrieving the situation in South Africa after the disaster of Majuba Hill and, twenty years later,

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his masterly handling of the situation in the Boer War are matters still fresh in the public mind.

Lord Roberts went out to South Africa at a moment's notice, cheerfully obeying his country's call at a time when his heart was seared by an unquenchable grief—the loss of his only son (who fell fighting at Colenso), sole heir to the title he had gained by his own noble deeds. He was as keen for the most arduous and dangerous work at that time, though in his sixty-eighth year, as when he saved a battery at the siege of Delhi, or earned the V.C. by chasing the enemy's horsemen to win back a Standard or save a comrade's life.

When Lord Roberts took command in South Africa he had Lord Kitchener as his Chief-of-Staff. They reached Capetown on January 10th, 1900, and, having organised a force, marched on Bloemfontein, relieving Kimberley, defeating and capturing the great Boer leader, Cronje, at Paardeberg.

The veteran Irish warrior, who was eighty-two years of age, was on a visit to France in November, 1914, in order to greet the Indian troops, of which he was Colonel-in-Chief. He contracted a chill, and died at the British Headquarters.

No military leader in modern times has been better loved by officers and men who served under him. The simplicity of his life, his splendid courage, his well known justice, his military genius, endeared him to all ranks.

From the commencement of the War, during over sixteen months of unparalleled strain, Field-Marshal Lord French commanded the British Armies in France and Flanders. In the driving back of the Prussian hordes from the gates

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of Paris, French and his wonderful little army played a heroic part, and not the least famous of his battle-scarred warriors were the men of the Irish regiments. They were the bravest, and their sacrificial deaths on the field of honour saved Europe and civilisation. French had a paternal love for the Irish troops, of two regiments of which—the Irish Guards and the Royal Irish Regiment—he was Colonel and Colonel-in-Chief respectively.

French shares with the military leaders of France the glory won at the battle of the Marne, when he joined in the prompt renewal of the offensive despite his serious losses and the great fatigue of his troops. Directly afterwards he made the passage of the Aisne—a bold and dangerous movement.

The first Battle of Ypres, which reached its culminating point on October 31st, 1914, will stand out as one of the great days in history. The struggle lasted three weeks. The odds against the British Army were tremendous; for to attack our hundred thousand men the enemy, in this desperate stroke to take the ports of the Channel, had concentrated between three-quarters of a million and a million men between Lille and the sea. To impress his troops with the importance of the occasion, the Kaiser addressed them in the very front of Ypres. Success of the German plan would have meant the domination of the Channel; the ports, in Lord French's words, would have been "laid bare to the enemy." The defence made by the vastly out-numbered British Army on the day of October 31st turned the tide. It cost Britain a great part of the finest army of its size that ever entered war. The regi-

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ments which emerged from it were mere fragments, but they emerged triumphant.

In December, 1915, at his own instance, he relinquished the command. The British Government, with full appreciation of the conspicuous services which Lord French had rendered to the country, requested him to accept the appointment of Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces, and Lord French accepted that appointment.

Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Wilson was born at Currygrane, Edworthstown, Ireland, on May 5th, 1863.

His first campaign was in the Burmese War of 1884-87, in which he was wounded. He took a course at the Staff College, Camberley, from 1892 to 1894, and on passing out served with the Intelligence Division as a staff captain for three years. He was then appointed as Brigade-Major to the 2nd Brigade at Aldershot, and remained there until the outbreak of the Boer War, when he proceeded to South Africa as Brigade-Major with the Light Brigade. Good work resulted in his being appointed Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General at Army Headquarters. During the war he was mentioned in despatches four times, and in 1901 received the D.S.O. He returned to England at the conclusion of the war with the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel. From 1902 to 1903 he was in command of the 9th Provisional Battalion, and again became D.A.A.G. at Army Headquarters. Thence onward his rise was rapid. He became Assistant Director of Staff Duties at the War Office between 1904 and 1906, and the following year had the great honour of becoming the Commandant of the Staff College he had entered twenty-five years previously.

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He was in command of the Fourth Army Corps in 1914-15 in France, where he gained a great reputation for personally superintending the conduct of operations. He was then brought home as Director of Military Operations.

In the early days of November, 1917, an Allied Council of War was set up. This decision was reached, after important deliberations between the Premiers of France, Britain, and Italy at Rapallo, and Versailles was fixed as the central seat of the coalition. General Foch, greatest of the military leaders, was selected as the French representative, and General Cadorna, at that time Commander-in-Chief of the Italian Armies, was appointed to represent Italy. The British representative in the Triumvirate was Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Wilson, a modest man, little known to the British public, with a big heart and a skilful brain.

Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Maude, the successful leader of the British forces in Mesopotamia, was, like many other famous generals in past and contemporary history, an Irishman.

This brilliant soldier, after more than thirty years' service, went to France at the outbreak of the war only as a Colonel. In Flanders he took part in the fighting in General Pulteney's 3rd Army, and fought for a time in the neighbourhood of Hill 60. It was in May, 1915, that his real chance came. At that time three divisions were sent out to reinforce Sir Ian Hamilton in Gallipoli. Within a few weeks the three generals commanding those divisions had disappeared. General Maude was sent to replace General Shawc, who had fallen sick. When the

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British troops left the ill-fated Peninsula, he had earned the reputation of being one of the ablest generals associated with that chequered campaign of heroism and disaster.

He was placed in command of the Mesopotamia expedition in 1916. General Townshend's gallant army, after a glorious defence, had been starved into surrender at Kut-el-Amara in April, 1916, and to Sir Stanley fell the task of restoring British prestige among the mercurial and impressionable races of the East, and transforming a halting campaign into a brilliant success. First came the recapture of Kut, and the disorderly flight of the Turks towards Bagdad with the loss of over 20,000 prisoners. Early in 1917, the great Turkish City of Bagdad was in British possession, and its capture was the climax to one of the most brilliantly conducted campaigns in military history.

Maude again gave evidence of his military genius by anticipating Falkenhayn's great plan for the recovery of Bagdad in the autumn of 1917. At the end of September, by a dramatic stroke, the British captured the garrison of Ramadie, taking 3,800 prisoners and 13 guns.

Sir Stanley died on November 18th, 1917, the victim of cholera. In announcing the death, "with deep regret and sorrow," in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister referred shortly to Sir Stanley's Mesopotamia campaign. The resource, precision and enterprise he had shown marked him out, he said, as a great leader and a commander of the first rank.

Lieutenant-General Sir Bryan Thomas Mahon, who attained the highest military rank in Ireland, was born at

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Belville, County Galway, 1862, and possesses all the Irish characteristics which suit a cavalry leader to perfection—brightness, buoyancy, determination, dash, and the conviction that he is out to win.

Entering the Army when he was twenty-one—in 1883—he went to India with his regiment, the 8th Hussars, and there served until 1899, but he had the good fortune to be noticed by Lord Kitchener and became very speedily “one of Kitchener’s men.” He took part in every campaign in Egypt from 1896 to 1899. He knows every step of the Nile from Dongola to Khartoum, and he knows a good deal more than that, for he was incessantly employed, although only a captain, as a young and daring cavalry leader partly of Regulars, but partly also of the improved Camel Corps, which was one of the eyes of Kitchener’s main body. Those were not the days of aeroplanes; all the scouting that was done had to be done by the cavalry, and hand-to-hand fighting was not uncommon. His first experience of active war was when Kitchener advanced from Dongola. It brought him the D.S.O. and mention in despatches. He took part in the battles of Atbara and Khartoum. His name was a regular feature in despatches, and by the end of 1908 he had the brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel. Early in 1900, he served in the Boer War, when after being attached to the Staff he was selected to command the Mafeking relief force. This operation made him famous.

The distinguishing feature of this march was the great skill with which he avoided serious encounters with the Boers, the more so when crossing a poorly watered country, over which he had to cover about eighteen miles a day for

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over a fortnight, these operations including in addition two engagements.

In 1904, he went back to India, remaining the Colonel of his old regiment, the 8th Hussars; he has also commanded since 1909 the Eighth Division in India, whose headquarters are at Lucknow, but his first big independent appointment was his command of the British forces in the Balkans—during the present war.

General Mahon is one of Britain's best cavalry leaders.

Lieutenant-General Sir Hubert de la Poer Gough is the eldest son of the late Sir Charles J. S. Gough, V.C., G.C.B., of County Waterford, and was born on August 12th, 1870.

He first made his name as a dashing cavalry leader—a man of infinite courage and resource in an open campaign. On the outbreak of the European War he commanded the 3rd Cavalry Brigade during the retreat from Mons and the battle of the Marne. His Brigade was one of the first to arrive at the Aisne on September 12th, 1914, and a few weeks later he was given command of the 2nd Cavalry Division.

In the first battle of Ypres, when the small British Army bolted the door of the North against the German sweep, his division played a foremost part. In the great struggle of October 30th and 31st it had desperate fighting to hold the line, and on November 1st it was forced back from Hollcbeke and Messines.

About the middle of July, 1915, he was appointed to command the 1st Corps, which stormed Fosse 8 and the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

During the spring of 1916 he was put in command of

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a Reserve Army, which became known as the Fifth. His greatest success came in the battle of the Ancre on November 13th, 1916, when, in two days, he took more than 5,000 German prisoners.

Admiral Sir David Beatty's name has rung through the length and breadth of the British Empire on several occasions. He became the most famous of living Irishmen, and rose to be Commander-in-Chief of the British Navy. He is the son of Captain D. L. Beatty, of Boro-dale, County Wexford.

Earl Beatty, as he now is, entered the Navy in 1884, and won early promotion to the rank of Commander for his distinguished services with the Nile gunboats during Lord Kitchener's Soudan campaign of 1898, and he was made captain for gallantry in China in 1900. He was until June, 1914, Naval Secretary to the First Lord of the Admiralty. He took up the command of the Battle Cruiser Squadron in March, 1913, and early in 1917 he was appointed to the Grand Command.

He took the foremost part in almost all the great naval battles of the war. He vanquished a German cruiser squadron on the Dogger Bank, and in the Battle of Jutland he was in command of the Battle Cruiser Fleet that engaged the full force of the German Navy.

He had the honour of striking the first great blow of the war at the German Navy in the Bight of Heligoland on August 28th, 1914, in the action in which the enemy lost the "Köln," "Mainz" and "Ariadne" (three light cruisers), and two destroyers, several other vessels being crippled.

The struggle with which Beatty's name will be forever

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linked in history is the Battle of Jutland. Seen in its broadest aspect, the battle stood out as a case of a tactical division of the Fleet, which had the effect of bringing an unwilling enemy to battle. Such a method of forcing an action was drastic and necessarily attended with risk, but for great ends great risks must be taken. They were actually carrying out, as they had been in the habit of doing periodically, a combined sweep of the North Sea, and Admiral Beatty's Fleet was in effect the observation or advanced squadron. The measure of the risk, should he have the fortune to find the enemy at sea, was the length of the period which must necessarily elapse before the Commander-in-Chief would be able to join the battle. It was a risk that would be measured mainly by the skill with which Admiral Beatty could entice the enemy northward without being overwhelmed by superior force. In the light of this outstanding feature the action will be judged, and the handling of the Battle Cruiser Fleet, and the splendid group of four battleships that was attached to it, appraised.

When Admiral Beatty got contact with the German battle cruisers they were proceeding northward, and being inferior to his force they turned to the southward. The inference was they were either trying to escape or bent on leading him into danger. When such a doubt occurs there is in the British tradition a golden rule, and that is to attack "the enemy in sight." It was the rule that Nelson consecrated, and it was good enough for Admiral Beatty. He engaged, and continued to engage as closely as he could till he found the enemy's battle fleet coming north. Then he turned, but he did not break off the action. The enemy

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was in overwhelming force, but by the golden rule it was his duty to cling to them as long as his teeth would hold. They had spread a net for him, and it was for him to see that they fell into the midst of it themselves. It was a task that demanded some courage. Yet he did not flinch, but continued to fight to the northward, and signalled the four Queen Elizabeths to turn 16 points.

Now was the hour of greatest risk, but he was well disposed for concentrating on the van of the enemy's line, and the Commander-in-Chief was hurrying down at full speed. For an hour and a half the unequal battle raged as Admiral Beatty and Admiral Evan Thomas led the enemy on, before Admiral Hood could appear with his Battle Cruiser Squadron. The action was then at its hottest, but Admiral Hood, without a moment's hesitation, and in a manner that excited the high admiration of all who were privileged to witness it, placed his ships in line ahead of Admiral Beatty's squadron. No Admiral ever crowned an all too short career more devotedly or in a manner more worthy of the name he bore.

With his fine manœuvre the risk was in a measure reduced, but there still remained the more delicate work of the Grand Fleet effecting its junction and entering the ill-defined action. With the exact position of the enemy's fleet shrouded in smoke and in the gathering mist, the danger of interference was very great, and before the Commander-in-Chief lay a task as difficult as any admiral could be called upon to perform. To the last moment he kept his Fleet in steaming order so as to preserve up till the end the utmost freedom of deployment, but by what

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precise manœuvres the deployment was carried out must for obvious reasons be left in a mist as deep as that which was hiding all that was most important for him to know. Suffice it to say that the junction was effected with consummate judgment and dexterity. So nicely was it timed that the deployment was barely completed when at 6.15 p.m. the First Battle Squadron came into action with the enemy, who had by that time turned to the eastward and was already attempting to avoid action.

Thus the fine combination had succeeded, and the unwilling enemy had been brought to action against the concentrated British Fleet. They had fallen into the midst of the net which had been drawn about them, but in the plan of the sweep there was inherent the inevitable limitation that the time left for completing the business could but barely suffice. There were hardly three hours of daylight left, and as darkness approached the action must be broken off unless a needless chance were to be given to the enemy for redressing his battle inferiority. Still our battle fleet was between the enemy and his base, and there would have been little hope of his escaping a decisive defeat but for the mist that robbed those who had prepared for the chance, and those who had seized it with so much skill and boldness, of the harvest they deserved.

It was a beaten and broken German fleet that escaped the trap. It had lost many units, its gunnery had gone to pieces, and no one can blame its discretion if it fairly ran for home and left the British Fleet once more in undisputed command of the North Sea.

By the terms of armistice, signed on November 11th,

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1918, the Germans agreed to give up their warships, and on November 21st Sir David Beatty received their fleet of battleships, cruisers, destroyers and submarines into his keeping. This fact shows that the largest naval surrender known in history was made into the hands of an Irishman.

Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Madden is an Irishman. His record of Naval service is as follows :—Fourth Sea Lord of the Admiralty, 1910–11 ; Commanded Home Fleet, 1911–12 ; Rear-Admiral commanding Third and Second Cruiser Squadron in the Home Fleet, 1912–14 ; Vice-Admiral, 1916.

Reference was made in Sir John Jellicoe's despatch on the Battle of Jutland to the brilliant work of Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Madden. "I cannot close this despatch," he said, "without recording the brilliant work of my Chief of the Staff, Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Madden, K.C.B., C.V.O. Throughout a period of 21 months of war his services have been of inestimable value. His good judgment, his long experience in fleets, special gift for organisation, and his capacity for unlimited work, have all been of the greatest assistance to me, and have relieved me of much of the anxiety inseparable from the conduct of the Fleet during the war. In the stages leading up to the Fleet action and during and after the action, he was always at hand to assist, and his judgment never at fault. I owe him more than I can say."

D. POLSON.

IRISH HEROES

WHO HAVE WON THE SUPREME
HONOUR FOR BRAVEST DEEDS IN WAR—
THE VICTORIA CROSS

THE FOLLOWING IRISHMEN WON THE VICTORIA CROSS DURING THE WAR

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CAPT. E. N. F. BELL.

COMMANDER THE HON. E. B. S. BINGHAM.

CAPT. J. A. O. BROOKE.

LCE.-CPL. T. BRYAN.

PTE. P. BUGDEN.

CAPT. J. F. P. BUTLER.

PTE. J. CAFFREY.

PTE. J. CARROLL.

LIEUT. G. ST. GEORGE S. CATHER.

SGT. W. COSGROVE.

CPL. W. R. COTTER.

CPL. J. CUNNINGHAM.

LIEUT. M. J. DEASE.

SGT. R. DOWNIE.

SEC. LIEUT. J. S. DUNVILLE.

CPL. E. DWYER.

SGT. J. J. DWYER.

CPL. F. J. EDWARDS.

C.-SGT.-MAJ. F. W. HALL.

LIEUT. F. M. W. HARVEY.

SGT. J. HOGAN.

LIEUT. J. V. HOLLAND.

GREAT IRISHMEN

CPL. T. HUGHES.
CAPT. H. KELLY.
PTE. W. KENEALEY.
DRUM-MAJOR KENNY.
SGT. T. KENNY.
PTE. T. J. B. KENNY.
LIEUT. MICHAEL O'LEARY.
PTE. J. LYNN.
PTE. M. O'MEARA.
SGT. S. MEEKOSHA.
PTE. M'FADZEAN.
PTE. R. MORROW.
CAPT. A. MOUTRAY-READ.
LCE.-SGT. J. MOYNEY.
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SEC. LIEUT. G. A. BOYD ROCHFORD.
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PTE. M. J. O'ROURKE.
CAPT. J. A. SINTON.
SGT. J. SOMERS.
CAPT. G. R. O'SULLIVAN.
SUB-LIEUT. A. W. ST. CLAIR TISDALL.
LCE.-CPL. J. TOOMBS.
MAJOR G. CAMPBELL WHEELER.
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PTE. T. WOODCOCK.

